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# Lights, Camera, Attraction!



*Universal Studios  
Mardi Gras*

**Y**es, there are plenty of beads to be caught during the Mardi Gras parades at Universal Studios, but this is just crazy! These guys take bead collecting to the extreme. No, the large beads the man on the left is wearing weren't thrown from a parade float. In addition to the smaller chains of beads thrown from the floats, such as the ones the guys on the right are buried in, Universal also sells many unique bead necklaces.



## Attractions News from Outside the Orlando Area

By Andy Guinigundo

### Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom Closed

**Louisville, Ky.** — Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom sits on Kentucky State Fair Board-owned land. Six Flags proposed a change in lease terms in order to help ensure the “viability and future of the park,” but the Fair Board rejected the proposal. As a result, Six Flags will cease operations at that location. Six Flags plans to relocate the 40 or so attractions in the park as well as some of the employees. Current pass holders can seek a refund or keep their passes, which are good at other Six Flags locations.

### Alton Towers to Open “Th13teen” Coaster

**Staffordshire, U.K.** — Alton Towers gets close to three million visitors annually. Last fall they announced a new coaster was coming and gave it the code name Secret Weapon 6. The final name of the ride is Thirteen written in a stylized fashion as “Th13teen”. The Intamin-manufactured coaster is built on the site previously occupied by The Corkscrew. Themed as an unearthed ancient burial site, it is being described as the world’s first “psychoaster” combining both physical and psychological scary elements. The attraction is set to open March 20.

### Captain EO Returns to Disneyland

**Anaheim, Calif.** — Since Michael Jackson’s death last year, fans of both the singer and Disney have clamored for a revival of the classic 3D attraction Captain EO that stars the King of Pop. At the D23 Expo last fall in Anaheim, it was hinted that this wish might indeed come true, but no date or even timeframe was set. Finally, on Feb. 23, the film reopened where it debuted at the Tomorrowland Theater in Disneyland. The film is a new 70mm print and sounds better since the theater’s acoustics were updated after the film closed in 1997. There’s no word on a return of the film to Epcot.

### Mr. Lincoln Finally Returns to Disneyland

**Anaheim, Calif.** — The voice of the 16th President of the United States once again emanates from the Main Street Opera House on Main Street USA in Disneyland. Nearly a year after its announced



return, the film and Abraham Lincoln audio-animatronic reopened on Dec. 18, 2009. The Lincoln figure is the most advanced and expressive audio-animatronic in the Disney collection. The original Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln show was a classic park attraction for nearly 45 years, having debuted in 1965.

### Dollywood to Open Adventure Mountain

**Pigeon Forge, Tenn.** — Originally planned for 2009, Adventure Mountain construction was delayed. All delays behind them now, Dollywood planned a March 27 opening for the Adventure Mountain attraction. Sitting on two acres of mountainside terrain, Adventure Mountain features four adventure courses that take anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour to complete depending on the course chosen. There is a course suitable for guests as young as two years old. Thrill seekers will not be disappointed with more than 100 rope obstacles, extreme trails, and bridges as high as 90 feet.

### Year of the Tiger Celebrated at Disneyland Hong Kong



**Hong Kong, China** — This past February, the Chinese Zodiac calendar year of the Tiger was celebrated at Hong Kong Disneyland. The Jumping Jam street party was full of acrobats and drummers and took place in front of Sleeping Beauty Castle. In the finale, Tigger bounces on the scene to welcome the year of the Tiger. Guests made their way along the Lucky Trail featuring floral beauty and Disney-stylized statues symbolizing luck. Special food, Main Street USA performers, and Disney characters dressed in Chinese New Year costumes rounded out the experience.

### Ground Breaking at Hong Kong Disneyland



**Hong Kong, China** — In December, a major milestone was met in the Hong Kong Disneyland expansion as the formal groundbreaking ceremony marked the official start of construction. Chinese and local government officials along with former Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Chairman Jay Rasulo were on hand with golden Mickey Ear-handled shovels. The expansion will include three new lands: Mystic Point, Grizzly Gulch, and Toy Story Land. The completion of the expansion will bring the total number of attractions to more than 100. Six-hundred full-time jobs will be added to the local economy after the expansion.

### Sky Rocket to Debut at Kennywood

**West Mifflin, Penn.** — Kennywood Park, just outside of Pittsburgh, is set to debut their seventh coaster named the Sky Rocket. Riders are launched to 50 mph in three seconds. This is followed by a 95-foot vertical ascent, a brief cliffhanger and 90-degree drop. There are three inversions and many other adrenaline-pumping features. The ride is expected to be completed in May.

### Thorpe Park to Open “The Saw” Walkthrough



**Chertsey, Surrey, U.K.** — Thorpe Park is the sister park to Alton Towers and both are owned by Merlin Entertainments, that runs the Legoland parks worldwide. Last year, they opened Saw — The Ride, a terrifying coaster based on the popular horror film series. Building upon the success of this fright, they will be opening a year-round walk-through dubbed Saw Alive Horror Maze. The live action walk-through will feature six iconic scenes from the “Saw” movies. The attraction is set to open this spring.



# Fan Favorite Returns

Disney's Summer Nightstastic! brings back a parade, adds new fireworks and Tower of Terror effects

By Matt Roseboom

The "Main Street Electrical Parade" will headline new after-dark excitement at Walt Disney World this summer. "After the sun goes down, our Walt Disney World parks will light up the night with 'Summer Nightstastic!,'" announced Meg Crofton, president of Walt Disney World Resort.

Although there will be summer celebrations all around the resort, three main events highlight Summer Nightstastic!

## Main Street Electrical Parade

Disney's "Main Street Electrical Parade" will return to the Magic Kingdom. Direct from the Disneyland Resort in California, and marking its first engagement in Florida since 2001, the fan favorite will be led by Tinker Bell waving from the

basket of a magical balloon aboard a new float. Pinocchio and Snow White also join the parade aboard bright new floats. The parade's beloved music and floats will feature more electrifying audio, plus new lighting technologies will create a pixie-dust effect on all the floats.

## New effects for Tower of Terror

The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror welcomes "drop-ins" this summer with new glow-in-the-dark lighting effects and the addition of a new drop sequence created especially for Summer Nightstastic!

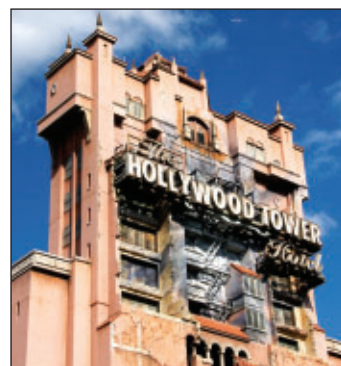
## New fireworks show

The Magic Kingdom will treat guests to a special summer fireworks spectacular. The night sky will explode in vivid colors and brilliant visual

effects as whimsical music fills the air. The fireworks show, which hasn't been named yet, is said to be a brand new, never before seen show.

This summer will also mark the return of the Sounds Like Summer concert series at Epcot, and Disney's Animal Kingdom which will have extended evening hours several times a week.

Summer Nightstastic will run from June 6 to Aug. 14.



## MYSTERY PHOTO



## WIN A PRIZE!

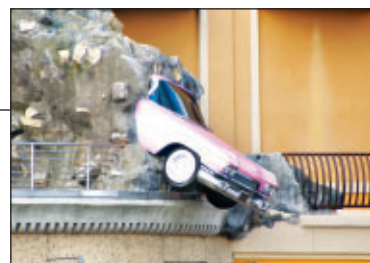
Tell us where this photo was taken and you could win a great prize! To enter, e-mail your answer, along with your name and mailing address to [mystery@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:mystery@attractionsmagazine.com).

**Hint:** You may be able to spot this guy elsewhere in this issue.



## LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

Congratulations to Robin Crane of Woonsocket, R.I., who correctly guessed last issue's Mystery Photo location. The pink car is embedded in a rock slide on the outside of the Hard Rock Cafe in Universal CityWalk.



The deadline for entries is June 1, 2010. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Please include your name and mailing address with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One answer, randomly selected from all the correct entries, will win a prize. We reserve the right to publish the name, city and state of those entering. One winner per household allowed each year.



# SPOT the DIFFERENCE

Donald Duck greets his fans from his float in Mickey's Jammin' Jungle Parade at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

**Can you find the 10 differences between these two pictures?**

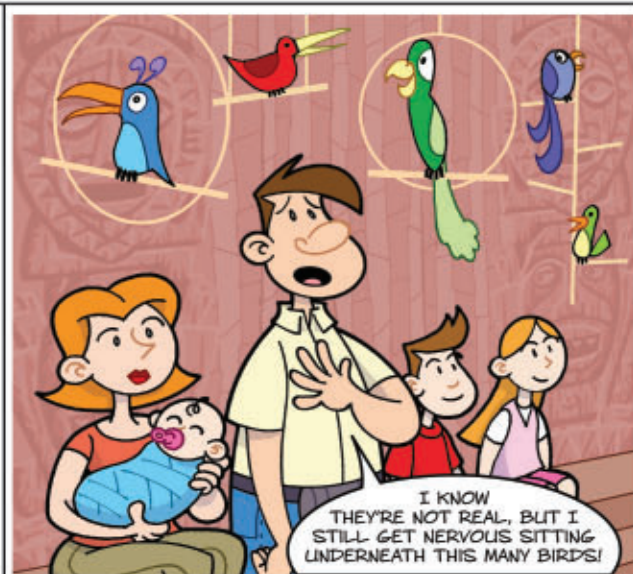
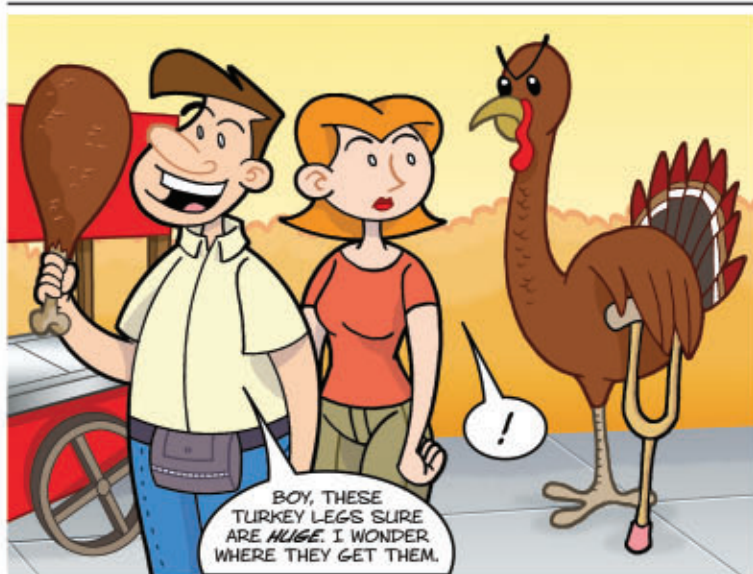


1. The anchor emblem has been removed from Donald's hat. 2. Donald's scarf changed color from green to yellow. 3. There are now two red oars. 4. The top flag on the rope of three changed color from orange to green. 5. Two hibiscus flowers have been added to the trees on the left side of the picture. 6. The bell on the right side of the picture no longer has a pull rope. 7. The rope on Donald's hat has changed color from red to green. 8. There is now a bird's nest in the trees on the right side of the picture. 9. A tie-down rope has been added to the bottom left of the picture. 10. The stripes have been removed from Donald's shirt sleeves.



# BEAMUSEMENT PARK

by John Green  
& Pat Lewis





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restroom necessarily provoke more wonderment, as you must navigate further S-turns in other slot canyons to visit either of the facilities.

The full extent of the attention paid to theming can only be gained by slipping outdoors for a few moments (there are also tables for outdoor dining, though these are not used during parts of the year). The bridges and overlooks of carved rock are intriguing enough, but it's the oversized statue of Atlas "holding up the restaurant" which really gives pause. In mythology, Atlas holds up the world; is Mythos then to be considered "the world?" You might be forgiven for at least conceding that Mythos is at least a world unto itself.

As grand as the theming might be, no restaurant can endure if its menu does not live up to expectations. On this count, Mythos continues to outperform.

The menu is varied, and manages to capture an elusive balance between familiarity and exoticness. Appetizers, for instance, include familiar items like shrimp cocktail (\$9.25) and tomato basil flatbread (\$7.50), but also more exotic fare such as tempura shrimp sushi (\$8.75) and sautéed button mushrooms and brioche (\$7.50).

Needless to say, you might have a hard time choosing an entrée. There's blueberry and pistachio crusted grilled pork (\$13.50), chicken a la Oscar (\$14.95), pan roasted Covina Provencal (\$15.95), the Mythos bistro filet (\$15.95), and the cowboy BBQ smoky steak sandwich (\$12.50). For those seeking more traditional theme park fare, you could opt for the grilled chicken club (\$10.95) or the cheddar-bacon burger (\$10.95).

Where the chefs excel, however, is in the pasta dishes. There are daily specials for around \$15 that allow them to exert particular culinary freedom, and it's here you're most likely to find bold flavors juxtaposed with traditional choices. There will naturally be misses along the way with the hits – a recent pad Thai attempt comes to mind – but by and large their creative expressions in the rotating pasta and risotto dishes are worth the experiment. Executive Chef Steven Jayson said that while "Mythos has many items that have been very popular, [perhaps] the risotto of the day dish and the tempura sushi are the two best known."

If you've managed to leave room for dessert, the \$1.75 "shots" are your best bet. Coming in flavors such as crème Brulée, key lime, choco-

late mousse, raspberry cheesecake, and tiramisu, you will appreciate these quick (and lower-calorie) dessert alternatives, particularly if you're already stuffed to the gills by the ample entrées (the child's meal pizza in particular is enough to feed two children).

Service will vary by visit; sometimes you'll find prompt and helpful servers who clearly enjoy their jobs, while other times you might experience over-extended servers who drop by less often than you'd like. Either way, it's not likely to be a quickie dining experience. Mythos is built to be somewhere higher-end on the theme park dining spectrum, and in this it always succeeds.

Mythos is usually open only for lunch, though in busier seasons it may be open for an early dinner as well. Advance reservations are not required, though they are available by calling the restaurant directly at (407) 224-4534, but be sure you call during lunch hours to avoid the answering machine.

If a visit to Universal isn't in your existing travel plans, you can also arrange to drop into Mythos even without paying park admission. Explain your desire at the ticket booth up front, and they'll run a credit hold for the full admission price on your credit card before letting you in the gate. As long as you return within 2.5 hours, your card will not be charged for the theme park admission.

The most noticeable component of Mythos may be its unparalleled theming, but its most laudable attribute is the menu. Operators of theme park



Although a large window provides a view over the lake and into the park, what's inside will capture most of your attention.

restaurants are under incessant pressure to meet consumer demand, and it's all too easy to give in to the lowest common denominator, which usually means simply stocking the menu full of easy favorites like chicken strips and macaroni and cheese. If such accommodation were to happen on a parkwide basis, you'd have a homogenization of culinary choices available to park visitors on any given day, but Mythos refreshingly refuses to give in to such external demands. As Chef Jayson noted, the menu has a "mainstream eclectic approach but [there are] no nachos and chicken wings here." The menu is what it is, and if today's creative dish isn't for you, then surely the next entrée on the list is more to your liking.



You'll notice something new at every turn. And each time you look a certain way, you may notice something you didn't see before.





It's not just the restaurant's design that will catch your eye. Mythos serves more than your standard theme park food.

PHOTO BY KEVIN YEE

**F**ew things at Universal's Islands of Adventure theme park come across as traditional amusement park entertainment, but even among such exemplars, one themed establishment in particular stands head and shoulders above the rest.

You'll find this restaurant, Mythos, nestled in a remarkably ornate cave of wind-swept rock columns, cascading waterfalls and intricate carvings, but it's not just the atmosphere which makes Mythos famous, the food is a cut above too. Universal Studios Executive Chef Steven Jayson points out

that "time and time again our guests' expectations are blown away by the overall quality of Mythos ... from the architecture to the food, Mythos is a one of a kind special restaurant."

One of the two table-service eateries in the park (the other is Confisco), Mythos has long been a fan favorite, and frequently wins Web site awards as the best theme park restaurant. Certainly it would have few challengers on the basis of its prominent exterior appearance. Jutting out into the inland sea of the park, the restaurant is essentially a small mountain chain unto itself, rendering it impossible to miss. From the other side where visitors approach via walkways, dramatic waterfalls call further attention to the structure. Even the name of the restaurant is meant to invoke mystery and ancient-world (and perhaps specifically Greek) allure. It is, after all, one of the centerpiece elements of the Lost Continent section of the park.

Once past the small lobby carved into the rock, visitors snake through a tight passage-

way so realistically constructed it's hard to believe you haven't been transplanted to the slot canyons which dot the landscape near the Grand Canyon. Inside the central chamber, the illusion of being in a transplanted place continues unabated. It's no mean trick to offer convincing immersiveness in Central Florida, the home of so many world-class theme parks, but Mythos delivers in spades. And yet, this giant cave is not dark and forbidding. Oversized picture windows along the far wall let in copious amounts of daylight, and the soaring cave ceilings (still sculpted cement, of course) impart such an air of breeziness and volume that it would be unlikely indeed to suffer claustrophobia in here.

An open-air arch along one wall lets us see the "on stage" kitchen humming busily, and small carved figures spout streams of water into little pools. Mysterious carved figures observe silently from the walls, some so artistically rendered that they are only visible from certain angles. Even tasks as mundane as visiting the



PHOTO BY KEVIN YEE

The restaurant seems to envelop the open kitchen.



# MYTHOS OFFERS A FEAST FOR THE EYES AND MOUTH

ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE RESTAURANT RATED ONE OF THE BEST

By Kevin Yee





of recreating Portofino, Italy, with our first onsite hotel," explained Hodges.

After years of construction, and within the time span of just a few months in 1999, Universal Studios grew to become the Universal Orlando Resort which included the new Islands of Adventure theme park, Universal CityWalk, and Portofino Bay.

## Opening Sequence

Located just off the main Universal Orlando streets, the entrance to the Portofino Bay Hotel leads guests down a long, winding road, surrounded by nothing but trees. It's the kind of seemingly endless pathway often seen during the opening credits of a movie, drawing viewers (or in this case visitors) away from the real world for a while.

At the end of the winding path, guests find themselves at the hotel's secluded main entrance with decor and architecture instantly recognizable as being straight out of Italy. Permanently parked in front of the entrance are several Italian cars, placed there to seemingly greet guests upon their arrival.

Guests traveling with a car should note that to achieve the hotel's unique level of quaintness and privacy, they'll be required to park their car somewhat out of the way in a nearby underground garage for an extra daily fee of \$15 or \$22 a day for valet service.

## The Setting

The Italian decor continues as guests enter the lobby. Opposite the checkout desk exists an elaborate sitting area featuring one of Portofino

Bay's nicest views. The balcony that extends outward from the sitting area reveals your first look at the Harbor Piazza, the main open area linking the hotel's rooms with its restaurants and stores. In a film, the aerial view offered by this balcony would serve nicely as what's known as an establishing shot, providing guests with initial overview of the Italian expanse.

To further the enjoyment of the high-up view, the hotel provides guests with complementary Italian Pomegranate soda in the nearby sitting area, adding a refreshing and uplifting touch as part of their welcome. Beyond the check-in area, the feeling of an Italian village continues through an indoor courtyard designed to make guests feel as if they were strolling comfortably outdoors. Upon closer inspection, guests might notice that much of the decor found throughout the hotel is not unlike that found on a Hollywood soundstage. Walls that appear to be carefully crafted from stone bricks are actually flat, painted to create an illusion of depth and texture.

## Story Development

If the hotel entrance, lobby, and Harbor Piazza are Portofino Bay's introduction, then its rooms form the basis for its main story. With dramatically tall ceilings, the standard rooms at Portofino Bay offer comfortable 300-thread-count cotton bedding and spacious bathrooms. Looking out the room's windows, guests may see a family of ducks waddling by or even spot a guest walking their own pet down a pathway.

# On-Site Enhancements

A stay at the Portofino Bay Hotel comes with a number of extras that enhance the guest experience. "The best one is free Universal Express access for all of our onsite hotel guests," explained Director of Public Relations Jennifer Hodges. "You simply show your hotel key card and you get to skip the lines for regular attractions at Islands of Adventure and Universal Studios theme parks."

That's because Loews is a pet-friendly hotel chain. Or, as Hodges put it, "We welcome all guests, whether they walk in on two legs or four legs." The hotel even features a special room service menu specifically for pets.

In addition to the standard rooms, Portofino Bay features other luxury options that include kid suites, themed either with sailboats or Dr. Seuss, and a variety of larger, more elaborate suites ranging from 900 square feet for a Portofino Suite all the way up to the Presidente Suite, which boasts an amazing 2,725 square feet of nothing-but-the-best comfort.

## The Characters

Beyond the comfort of the hotel rooms lies plenty of Italian culture to explore. Wandering the hotel grounds, guests will find themselves surrounded in a world of Italian flags flapping in the harbor breeze and additional supporting details, such as parked motor scooters, docked boats, and Bocce courses, that add authenticity to the experience.

The hotel's popular Mama Della's Ristorante brings guests into an Italian mother's house, with "Mama Della" and her helpers ready to serve a

home-cooked meal. In addition to the authentic cuisine, Mama Della's provides entertainment over dinner in the form of strolling musicians.

Emerging from the aforementioned Harbor Piazza balcony, "Musica della Note" ("music of the night") fills the air as some of the same musicians from Mama Della's perform a nightly opera show for guests below.

Beyond Mama Della's, Portofino Bay also offers a variety of other culinary choices throughout its many restaurants that include a wine bar, brick oven pizzas and antipasto.

## Closing Credits

When a stay at the Portofino Bay Hotel concludes, guests leaving by the same long, winding path that welcomed them are given the chance to reflect on the Italian experience they have just enjoyed. As the closing credits roll on this cinematic hotel stay, guests will likely find themselves hoping for a sequel. Visit [AttractionsMagazine.com](http://AttractionsMagazine.com) for a full photo gallery of the hotel.

Loews Portofino Bay Hotel is located at 5601 Universal Blvd., Orlando, Fla. 32819. Reservations can be made by calling 1-888-273-1311.



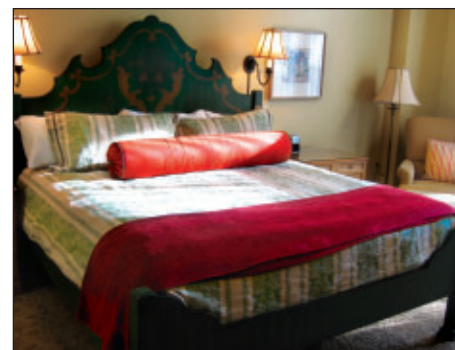


PHOTO BY RICKY BRIGANTE



PHOTO BY RICKY BRIGANTE





# Italian Charm at the Loews Portofino Bay Hotel

Universal  
Orlando hotel  
caters to guests in  
cinematic fashion.

**By Ricky Brigante**

**T**ucked quietly away from nearby busy Orlando streets and highways, Universal Orlando's Portofino Bay Hotel offers its guests a combination of Italian-style romantic relaxation and comfort.

Entering into Portofino Bay is not unlike sitting down in a quiet cinema to enjoy a film. The hotel allows guests to leave their worries behind and experience another world, complete with its culture, cast of characters and cuisine.

## **Production**

As with a great motion picture, the creation of the Portofino Bay Hotel was a large-scale production. It was part of an ambitious project to expand the Universal park to an entire resort. And like many great films, this project had a star director involved. According to Jennifer Hodges, director of public relations at Loews Hotels at Universal Orlando, Portofino Bay was Steven Spielberg's idea. "He suggested the idea







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\*Guest/Presenter attendance is subject to change.



# LEGOLAND FLORIDA *YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED*

## When will the park open?

The Legoland makeover will take approximately two years. They're expecting to open at the end of 2011.

## Why Polk County?

Officials said they visited Cypress Gardens in past years and fell in love with the place. They explained that their other theme parks are also located on beautiful grounds. They looked at many locations in Orlando but ultimately chose Cypress Gardens. They also added that if they had built from scratch on another location, it would have taken them five or six years.

## Will the gardens remain?

Yes. They stressed they will keep the beautiful gardens.

## What about the Southern Belles and the Florida shaped pool?

They haven't decided if they'll remain.

## Will they keep the water ski shows?

They haven't decided for sure, but they hope to. They think the water ski show could easily be themed with the Lego brand.

## Will the Cypress Gardens name remain?

It may remain in some form. The location will be called Legoland Florida, and eventually Legoland Florida Resort. They are thinking about calling the gardens part of Legoland "Cypress Gardens". If so, you'd go to Legoland Florida to visit the Cypress Gardens.

## How many attractions will there be?

They're planning around 50 all together. This includes rides and shows.

## Will any of the Cypress Gardens rides remain? What about the wooden roller coasters?

Some of Cypress Gardens' rides have already been removed. Some of them have been sold but not moved off property yet. Officials said they will probably keep some of the rides and retheme them. They are thinking about keeping one of the wooden roller coasters, but didn't say which one.

## Will a Legoland hotel be built?

Eventually they plan to build an onsite hotel, but not right away.

## How do I get there from Orlando?

The property is about a 45- to 55-minute drive from Downtown Disney. From Orlando, you would take I-4 West to exit 55, (U.S. 27 South), then turn right on Cypress Gardens Boulevard. It's an easy drive if I-4 traffic isn't bad.

## Will they offer promotions with other Central Florida theme parks?

They hope to. They said they're willing to work with any of the other theme park companies including Disney.

## Will the water park remain? Will it become a Legoland water park?

Yes, the water park will remain. It won't become a Legoland Water Park right away, but if their upcoming first Legoland Water Park, which opens in California in June, does well, they may open one here.

## Will the water park be included with admission to Legoland?

No. It will require a separate ticket.

## How much will ticket prices be to Legoland?

They haven't announced prices yet, but a current one-day adult ticket to Legoland California is \$67.



Legoland Florida will include an area of miniature buildings made of Legos, like the ones currently at Legoland California.



Some children from a local children's home play with the bricks dumped during the opening announcement.





Legoland California photos courtesy of Merlin Entertainments.

These two photos from Legoland California give some idea of the kinds of attractions coming to Florida.



a 90 percent plus intention to visit by families in their target market. Merlin executives said they believe Winter Haven is the perfect site for Legoland.

The development follows the success of Legoland California which opened in 1999. Legoland California was recently voted the country's best children's theme park by "Amusement Today" for the sixth year running. It is also recognized as the fastest growing theme park in the U.S.

Legoland Florida will be the biggest Legoland Park ever opened and will offer a mix of more than 50 rides, shows and attractions, including large Lego models and other interactive elements. Speaking about the Lego models of famous American cities, which will be a part of the Florida park, Varney said "You won't believe the detail of these Lego models."



Florida Governor Charlie Crist was presented with a Florida Panther made of Legos during the Legoland Florida announcement.

Thousands of Legos were dumped to the ground to mark the arrival of Legoland in Florida.





# IT'S TRUE! LEGOLAND<sup>®</sup> IS COMING TO FLORIDA

## LEGOLAND FLORIDA TO OPEN IN FORMER CYPRESS GARDENS LOCATION

By Matt Roseboom

Merlin Entertainments recently announced a multi-million dollar investment for its biggest family tourist center in the world with the planned opening of Legoland Florida. Merlin purchased the historical Cypress Gardens property in Winter Haven, Fla., and will open Legoland Florida on the site at the end of 2011.

During the press conference to announce the coming park, Merlin Entertainments Chief Executive Nick Varney said, "Walt Disney once famously remarked to all of his executives 'Remember guys, this all started with a mouse.' Well, in the case of Legoland, it all started with a humble Lego brick in 1949."

The deal to buy the 145-acre site includes the current theme park and water park as well as an operating lease in perpetuity on the historic botanical gardens. The Florida



Fans of the gardens part of Cypress Gardens won't have to worry. Legoland officials plan on keeping the garden area of the park. No plans have been made as to the topiaries.

development will be Merlin's second Legoland Park in North America. It will provide a full-

day, year round, theme park experience geared towards families with children between the ages

of two and 12. "There are a lot of very good theme parks, particularly in the state of Florida," said Varney. "But what they do predominately is put people on rides and do things to them. Legoland's predominate focus is to have the child engaged in doing things and interacting with the environment and attraction."

Legoland Florida's design will mirror the successful concept of the four existing Legoland Parks in Denmark, Germany, U.K. and California. However, as with the other four, it will also have its own unique "twist," adding a Florida flavor. "(We'll have) state of the art rides and roller coasters, appropriate to the age group," added Varney.

The decision to open a Legoland park in Florida was made by Merlin over a number of years. Their research indicated a high recognition of the Legoland park brand and



Disney's Pin Traders at Downtown Disney sells all the latest pins and pin sets. You can also get a look at upcoming pins and find out their release dates.



## Disney Pin Trading Facts

- An estimated 25,000 cast members trade pins with guests at Walt Disney World, Disneyland and on the Disney Cruise Line each day.
- The total number of pins available to trade from cast members' lanyards on any given day is approximately 273,000.
- Originally, only one cast member in a particular location was to serve as the designated pin trader of the day. This concept was quickly abandoned.
- There have been a variety of lanyard colors used by cast members for trading. The original color in 1999 was black. In 2003, the kids only green lanyards were introduced. In 2005, gold lanyards were worn for the Happiest Celebration on Earth, followed by blue lanyards in 2006 during the Where Dreams Come True campaign. Black lanyards have returned with a specially designed 10th anniversary lanyard card.
- The first two official Disney Pin Trading pins were the 2000 Dancers Millennium pin and a Disney Pin Trading logo pin.
- The most expensive pin was a Dream Jeweled Mickey Mouse pin covered in 130 different semi-precious stones that retailed for \$1,295 and was released in a limited edition of three.

scrapped as seconds or because they were defective in some way.

### More Information Online

Online resources can actually be quite useful in starting or fostering the hobby of pin trading. Many Disney Web sites have discussion forums where members discuss the collecting and trading of pins. Of special note are Pin Pics (pinpics.com), Diz Pins (dizpins.com) and the official Disney site (disneypins.com) that feature a pin database and news about forthcoming releases. However, Dizpins owner Joette McHugh said the hobby is more than just the thrill of the chase. "It's not all about those little shiny pieces of metal. It's about the people

and the friends you make that will last a lifetime."

### Easy As 1-2-3

The actual trading of pins is really quite easy. The basic rules of thumb are, don't grab another person's lanyard. Instead, ask to see a pin, or set of pins. When trading with a cast member, you may trade one of your pins for one of theirs, provided they don't already have the pin you would like to trade. When the actual swap happens, hand the pin over with the back attached. This is a safety consideration. One other stipulation is that Disney does not condone the exchange of any money as a part of a pin trade.

Nowadays, a large percentage of Disney cast mem-

bers wear lanyards with pins. Following the rules we just discussed, any visitor can approach a cast member and trade up to two pins on their lanyard. Cast members often have special pins on their lanyards that are not available for purchase. These pins are often issued as a part of a series and may feature a "hidden Mickey". Some cast members wear their pins on a green lanyard. These pins can only be traded with visitors who are 12-years-old or younger.

Disney dad Richard Russell introduced his daughter to the hobby on their most recent trip. "It was really cool. It totally brought her out of her shell and by the end of the trip she was spotting the pins all over the place."





## Trading Other Places

Other locations in the Orlando area also sell souvenir pins as well. Visitors to Universal Studios can find character pins featuring everyone from Betty Boop to Spider-man. Since movies are a big draw for this park, it's not uncommon to see pins featuring Jaws, ET, or Twister. Some of their employees also wear lanyards full of pins for trading.

Universal Studios' Citywalk is home to the Hard Rock Café, where pin collectors can find a wide variety of rock and roll and surf inspired pins.

Visitors to SeaWorld can also collect pins featuring penguins, dolphins and everyone's favorite orca, Shamu. The park has yet to fully embrace the pin craze. According to SeaWorld's Greg Smith, "We do sell souvenir pins at SeaWorld but are not really involved with any pin trading clubs or organizations."



A cast member at Disney's Hollywood Studios, left, lets a guest pick a pin among the many in her hat.



Some pins come in sealed packages. You won't know which ones you'll get until you buy and open the box.

## Q&A with a Disney pin enthusiast

Joette McHugh is the founder of the Disney pin trading Web site, Dizpins.com. We spoke with McHugh to find out what makes the pin trading hobby so appealing.

**Orlando Attractions Magazine:** How long has your Web site been around?

**Joette McHugh:** Dizpins has been around since October of 1999.

**Attractions:** How did it get started?

**McHugh:** When it started, no one thought it would be around long because we had no idea of the magnitude pin trading would take on for people. It is still going strong, if not stronger today.

**Attractions:** Is your site for the novice or expert pin collector?

**McHugh:** Dizpins is for all pin collectors. In fact, we have a PizPINtroduction board for all of our newbies who are just starting out. We share information, trade pins and most of all, Dizpins is a caring site. We were there when [Hurricane] Charley struck Florida and donated over \$2,000 to the Red Cross. We have helped each other in times of crisis. We have shared the magic of Christmas with those less fortunate. We have had new members born into our community and we have helped and been there when others have passed on.

**Attractions:** How did you personally get started in the hobby?

**McHugh:** I was caught up in the Beanie craze and said I would never do anything like that again. I went to Walt Disney World in October 1999 and said, "No! I am not gonna get involved in pins." Well, I saw a pin on a cast member's lanyard. It was the helmsman Mickey and I wanted it so bad. I had no pins to trade, so I purchased a pin and traded it to the cast member. I got my Mickey. I said "no more" but then we heard a rumor that Dopey was a difficult pin to find, and we found one and were so excited. We were in the World of Disney store one day, and my hubby comes over with the other six dwarfs and says [laughing], "We can't just have one dwarf." And I guess, as they say, the rest is history.



# 10 Years of Pin Trading



thing about trading is that it was planned to only last through the end of 2000."

A special event is being planned at Epcot this summer. For three days, guests will be able to trade next to the world's longest lanyard and the world's biggest Mickey ear hat. Exact dates haven't been set yet. On Oct. 10, traders can trade for a special 10 hours of pin trading, and purchase pins designed especially for 10/10/10.

## Many Ways to Start Trading

So what gets people started in pin collecting? "I was walking at night to find a spot to watch Spectromagic, when my shoe started clinking," says pin aficionado Jennifer Edmond. "I looked at the bottom of my shoe and a Cinderella Missouri pin was stuck in my shoe. I call it my lucky pin." Clearly, there are a number of ways to get swept up in the pin craze. Obviously, the first thing you need to do is to get your hands on some official Disney pins. The first place most people decide to check is one of the Disney World parks, with the local Disney

Store being a close runner-up. There is certainly no shortage of locations for pin acquisitions when strolling through Walt Disney World. Disney has even created starter sets, which often include a lanyard and four pins.

## Best Bets for Buying

But Disney is not the only source for pins. It shouldn't come as any surprise that you can buy official trading pins on eBay. The online auction giant has become a valuable resource for kick-starting the

habit. I mean ... hobby. Here you will find tradable pin sets to get the hobby going. Pin veterans also use the site to track down the final "Holy Grail" pin that will complete their set. Also noteworthy, is that pins can often be purchased online for as much as half what they might cost new. This is a real benefit if your primary goal is to trade them away. There is a hazard though according to pin enthusiast Carolyn Hier. "I have found that one of the best ways to cut back on the expense is to buy traders by the lot on eBay. Of course, if you find any in the lot that you have to have, that kind of defeats the purpose."

There are other cautions when using non-Disney sites like eBay. First, check the seller's feedback as you would with any other purchase. Also, the popularity of pin trading has spawned a bit of dark side. Some will sell pins commonly known as "Scrappers". As the name suggests, these are pins that were



Pin enthusiast Darin Schroeder shows off his jacket and vest full of pins.



Pin Central at Epcot has tables set up for trading.

Photo courtesy Disney



# PIN COLLECTING is no fad Disney is Celebrating

By Doug Rapson

They're valued by kids and adults, alike. Some view them as a hobby, some a memory, still others – a sickness. But no matter how you view them, there's no denying that theme park enthusiasts love trading pins.

## How It All Started

Pin trading really caught

on in 1999 when Disney made it a part of their Millennium Celebration and it included the debut of Pin Central at Epcot as the first dedicated Disney Pin Trading location. Now more than 10 years later, Disney has released more than 30,000 official pins and there has been no sign it will let up any

time soon. Pins that celebrate characters, resorts, and numerous attractions dot the Disney landscape.

As the project manager for Disney trading, Steven Miller is enthusiastic about the Decade of Magical Trades, which lasts until Oct. 10. Miller recently wrote on the official Disney Parks

Blog, "For the celebration, we made some incredibly fun pins that I think guests will love – from the 'Limited Edition 100s', to the limited edition 'Tribute Collection' that spotlights highly desired or frequently traded pins we have released since the start of Disney Pin Trading." Miller added, "The funny

Disney's Pin Traders at Downtown Disney has the largest collection of pins for sale on Disney property.





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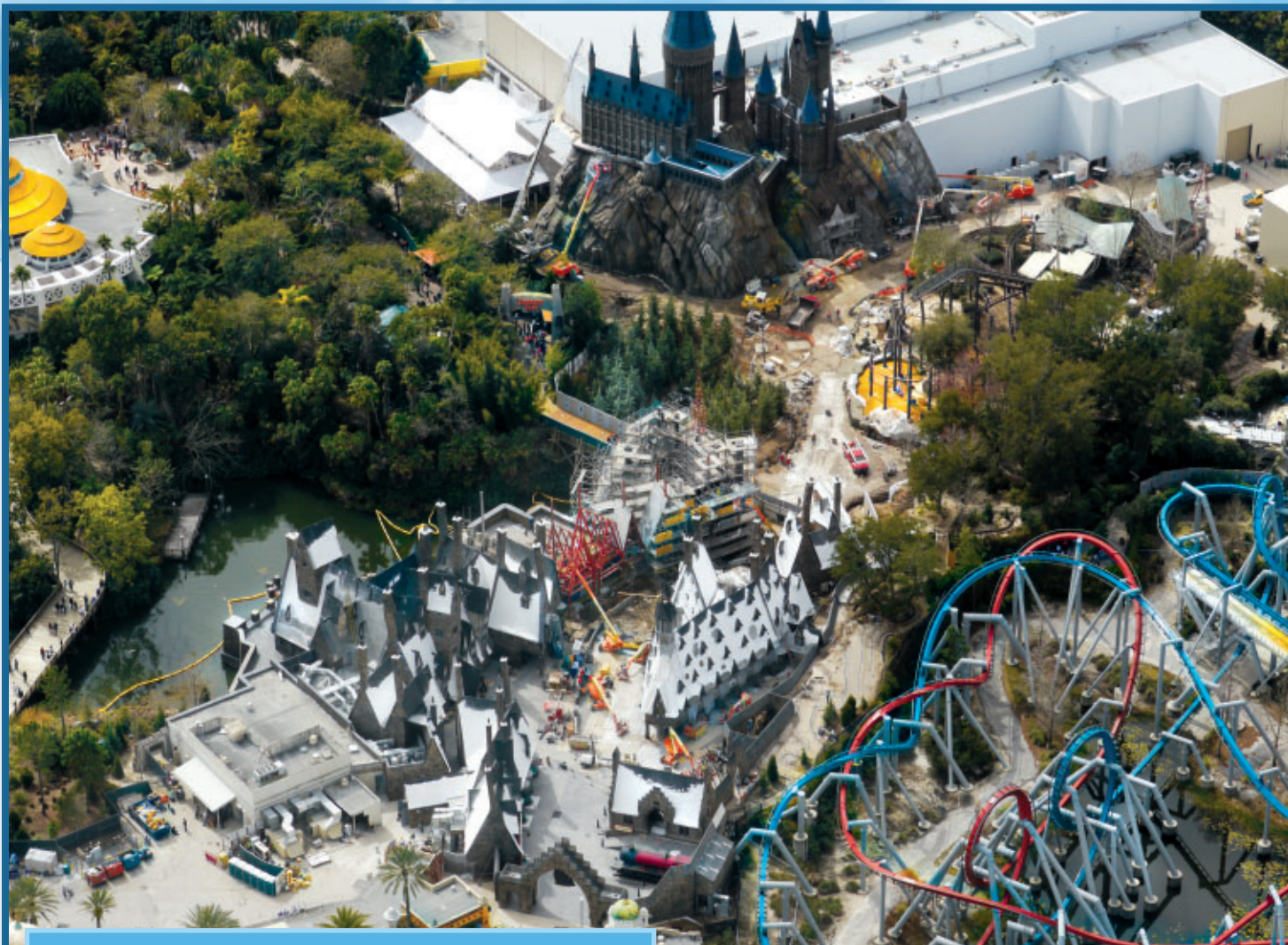
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## ONLINE EXTRAS

**Video and Photos**  
[www.attractionsmagazine.com](http://www.attractionsmagazine.com)

In addition to more amazing photographs, check out videos from above The Wizarding World of Harry Potter and many of Orlando's theme parks.

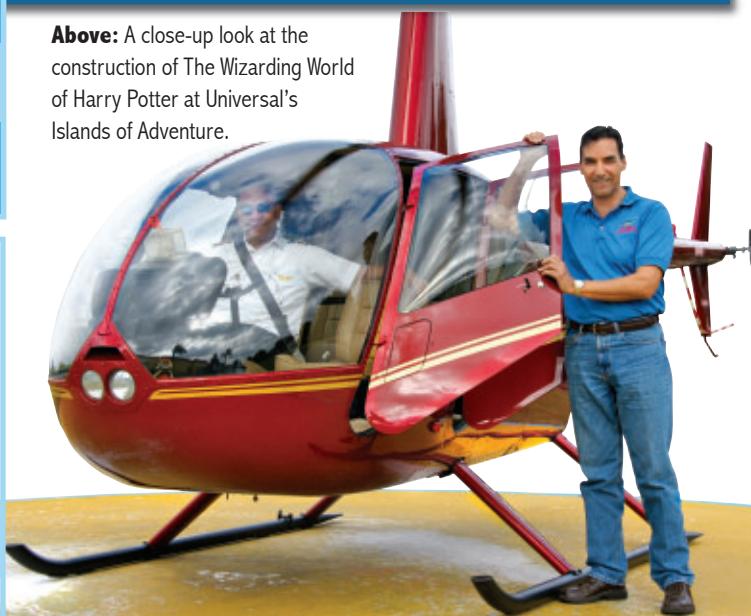
## THE MAGNIFICENT NINE

Air Florida's nine main tours vary from the three-minute International Drive and SeaWorld tour (just \$20 for children 12 and under, \$25 for adults) to a grand Central Florida extravaganza, taking in all the theme parks as well as Lake Apopka (and some alligator-spotting) and the mansions of the rich and famous in Windermere (at \$325 and \$335). Each flight requires a minimum of two and maximum of three people, with a maximum load weight of 550 pounds. They run from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, with their unique night-flight for the Epcot fireworks at 8:45 p.m.

**For more information, call 407-354-1400  
 or visit [airfloridahelicopter.com](http://airfloridahelicopter.com).**

**While Air Florida is one of Orlando's longest-running helicopter  
 tour companies, you can also try International Helitours  
 (407-239-8687 or [internationalhelitours.com](http://internationalhelitours.com))  
 or Orlando Helicenter (407-396-6006, [www.orlandohelicenter.com](http://www.orlandohelicenter.com)).**

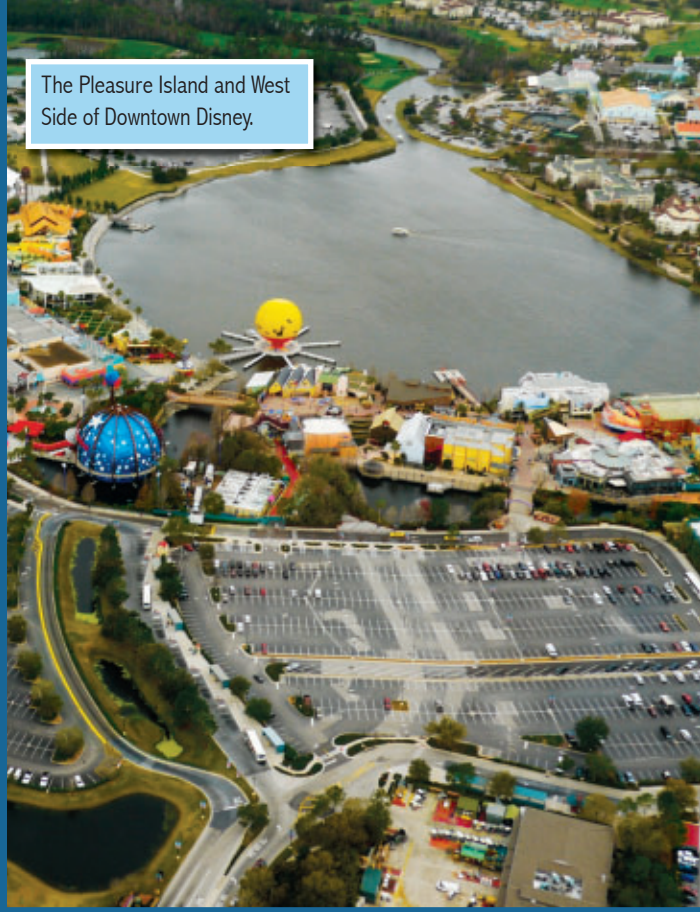
**Above:** A close-up look at the construction of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal's Islands of Adventure.



Air Florida Helicopter Tours Co-Owner Carlos Guarilha is ready to lift-off with pilot Manuel at their International Drive flight base.



The Pleasure Island and West Side of Downtown Disney.



Cockpit Panorama - from close up to high level, the Central Florida landscape opens up into a magnificent vista of bustling highways and serene lake scenery.



The Future World area of Epcot. The large round building in the bottom left houses the Test Track ride.



SeaWorld and Aquatica. It was an amazing 15-minute whirl above just about every highlight the area has to offer.

The bird's eye view (varying from 800 feet to 1,000 feet above Disney) provides a genuinely fascinating look into the parks but also shows how wonderfully-themed hotels like Universal's Portofino Bay are just as convincing from the air as the ground, and twice as spectacular. The view of the

fast-developing Wizarding World of Harry Potter in the Islands of Adventure theme park is a little short of astounding.

But, as Carlos indicated, the true splendor of this kind of aerial tourism is seeing just how this vast conurbation fits together; how all the parks slot into a jigsaw puzzle of perfect dimensions; and how utterly unique Orlando is as a vacation destination.



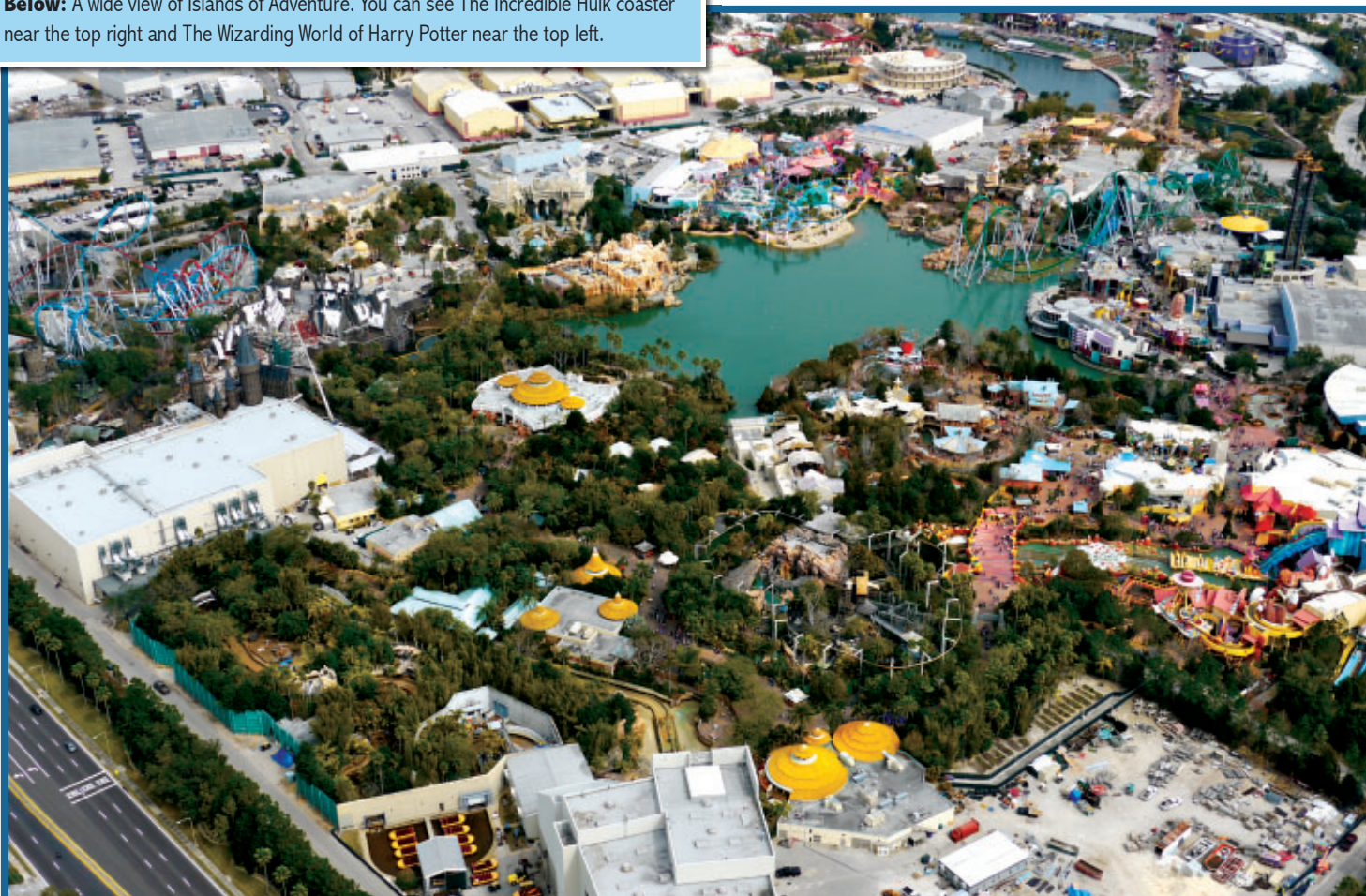
A visiting father and daughter are all smiles after their helicopter ride.





**Above:** SeaWorld. You can see the new Mantra roller coaster in the top right and the Kraken roller coaster at the bottom of the photo.

**Below:** A wide view of Islands of Adventure. You can see The Incredible Hulk coaster near the top right and The Wizarding World of Harry Potter near the top left.







long way – all the way to the Kennedy Space Center on a clear day. A lot of people want to see how it all works, how it all fits together. But many of our customers just want to see how a helicopter flies.”

Carlos is a great story in himself. Originally from Brazil, he took the bold step to immigrate to the U.S. in 1988 and worked in New York, Connecticut and Daytona, Fla. before finding a permanent home in Orlando. Although his background was aviation in general and helicopters in particular – “My uncle gave me a little plastic plane when I was 7, and that was what hooked

me on aviation” – he couldn’t get a job in the business directly.

So, like many others in “O-town,” he did a variety of jobs (often two or three at a time), to earn his way through the tourist trade. “I worked in restaurants, sold newspapers and cleaned hotels. The language barrier made it difficult to transfer my flying license but I didn’t see myself doing anything else and I stuck at it. Then, nine years ago I got the chance to come here on a part-time basis and now I am co-owner.”

Every flight with Air Florida Helicopters begins with a full safety briefing and

proper instruction in how to approach and board one of their two machines. “Some people can’t even put the seat-belt on because they are so excited,” Carlos added. “But they soon get the hang of it. The fact is, I feel much safer in a helicopter than a plane but most people don’t really understand that. They all love the flight, though.”

And it is easy to see why. The smooth way you take off and are soon buzzing over some of Orlando’s most iconic sights is quite breath-taking. Their most popular tour takes in a full circuit of the theme parks (they cannot fly over

Disney’s Magic Kingdom, though, as there is a three-mile no-fly zone since 9/11) and large parts of International Drive.

Another tour includes downtown and the chance to see scenic Lake Eola and all the development of the Centroplex area, while another takes in the 9 p.m. fireworks at Epcot – a truly exclusive take on one of Disney’s crowning glories.

*Orlando Attractions Magazine* was given the full 30-mile-round tour of Wet ‘n Wild, Universal Orlando, Downtown Disney, Typhoon Lagoon, Epcot, Disney’s Hollywood Studios, Discovery Cove,



# A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

**Story by Simon Veness**

**Photos by Matt Roseboom and Simon Veness**

**T**here are any number of memorable rides in Orlando. From the theme parks to the Kennedy Space Center, they offer a fabulous array of thrills and excitement. But, for all their ingenious design and hair-raising elements, none of them can really achieve lift-off. Unless you take a helicopter ride.

And, increasingly, while the parks offer their simulators and similar “pretend” experiences, people are turning

to the real-life enjoyment of a genuine aerial adventure to highlight their vacation. Give one a try, and Orlando will never look the same again.

It will also look amazing, dazzling, panoramic and mind-boggling. Because this is the only way to get a proper perspective on the vast and complex playground here in Central Florida, how it all fits together; how creative their components are, and how complete, even from the air, the theming can be.

There are several operators you can try. You can often see their helicopters buzzing around the main tourist areas of International Drive and Highway 192 in Kissimmee. They have been a part of the local scene for more than 20 years.

Air Florida Helicopter Charters is situated in arguably the most eye-catching location, right in the heart of the bustling corridor of International Drive and highly visible from I-4. They have been here since 1995

and their four pilots boast thousands of hours in the Central Florida air.

“We offer nine different tours, and flights by both day and night,” said Co-owner Carlos Guarilha. “It is a very different experience at night – you have no idea how many people live here until you go up at night and see all the lights. It is like being in Los Angeles.

“But Orlando is a beautiful city from the air. Because the land is so flat, you can see a



As you approach Disney's Hollywood Studios, you'll be able to get a good overall view of the park. As the photo on the opposite page shows, once you get a little closer to the theme parks, you'll be able to see many more details.



guests can help with conservation efforts. Kids can touch replica bones of endangered and exotic animals or sit at a small activity desk with informative coloring and activity books. There is also a small area for sending out e-cards to friends back home.

Throughout the day, different animals, such as birds, reptiles or an anteater, are brought to this area or carried throughout the park as educators answer guests' questions.

## Space Fills Up Fast

When it comes to food and drinks, "everything included" means unlimited all day access to snacks such as soft pretzels, yogurt and cookies, as well as bottled water, juices, sodas, beer and wine. Snack stations are located throughout the park.

Meals include a light continental breakfast and several lunch options including hot offerings such as pasta or seafood dishes, or cold choices such as salads and sandwiches. And of course there's always dessert.



Lunch, beverages and snacks are included in your admission to Discovery Cove.

"I thought they did this quite well," said Mulligan. "They had a nice selection of different types of food during lunch and I was impressed."

Overall, DeJesus said anyone wanting to come to the park should make their reservations as soon as possible as space can fill up months in advance. However, because there are cancellations, go ahead and call if you come to town and find an unexpected open day in your schedule.

"I think Discovery Cove is what people have wanted for a long time – the opportunity to get up close and personal with so many different animals," said DeJesus. "When I was a kid I would go to SeaWorld and then dream about what it would be like to be in one of the shows or be with those animals. Discovery Cove is a place where you can fulfill that dream in a safe environment."



## DOLPHIN FACTS

- Since opening more than 10 years ago, more than 20 baby dolphins have been born at Discovery Cove.
- They try to ask each of their 40 dolphins to participate in at least one guest interaction a day, although many seem to like to participate in more.
- Trainers may come in as early as 3 a.m. to prepare the food for the dolphins.
- The dolphins are constantly examined to make sure they're healthy.

## RATES

**Standard Package** – Regular rates through the rest of 2010 are \$199 with a dolphin interaction and \$99 without the interaction or for kids between the ages of 3 and 6.

**Ultimate Experience** – Includes 14 consecutive days of admission at SeaWorld and Aquatica in Orlando and Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, along with the one-day pass to Discovery Cove. \$279

**Trainer for a Day** – This experience includes three personal interactions and behind-the-scenes time with a dolphin trainer, as well as the standard Discovery Cove package features. Prices start at \$398. Those between the ages of 6 and 13 must be accompanied by a paying adult.

## SPECIAL DELIVERIES

What better way to say "I love you" than by dolphin delivery? Discovery Cove has been offering several Special Occasion packages for birthdays, Valentine's Day and marriage proposals featuring the delivery of a personalized message on a keepsake buoy by one of the park's resident dolphins.

Visit [www.discoverycove.com](http://www.discoverycove.com) or call 1-877-557-7404 for the latest prices.  
Online Extras: Video & Photos



PHOTO COURTESY OF DISCOVERY COVE





Guests can swim with and feed many stingrays.



The birds in the aviary aren't afraid to perch on your arm for a snack.



This interaction is open only to those older than six.

### Swimming with Rays, Fish, and Sharks?!

The Tropical Reef area of the park is actually made up of two pools. The larger Coral Reef features a partially submerged ship and 10,000 colorful tropical fish for snorkelers to swim among. For the more adventurous,

there's also an area behind acrylic partitions that houses sharks. When underwater, the partitions seem to fade away, giving the feeling that you're actually swimming close enough to reach over and touch the sharks.

"Discovery Cove is a great place for families because it is such a controlled environment here," said DeJesus. "Safety is our number one concern, not only for our animals but also for our guests who interact with them. When it comes to snorkeling in the reef, there aren't any currents you have to worry about, yet you get the chance to see so many beautiful fish. Plus there are lifeguards and safety personnel always on duty."

For an even calmer atmosphere, the smaller Ray Lagoon is a shallow pool where guests can wade or snorkel while schools of southern and cownose rays swim close by. At certain times, guests can also help feed these gentle gliding giants that can grow up to four feet in diameter. Be sure to ask the aquarist on duty about the feeding times. Another important tip: The beautiful water creatures in both pools are abundant. So bring along an underwater camera.

"I liked that you could stay in there as long as you wanted and it was fun to see the stingrays that close, to see them float right next to you and you could touch them," said Mancini. "They were kind of slimy but soft."

Close to the reef areas is the Wind-Away River, a sort of lazy river that meanders through the park, including

through a cave, a forest, and by several beach and pool areas. Flotation devices, or "floaties," are provided if needed since there are several depths throughout the course.

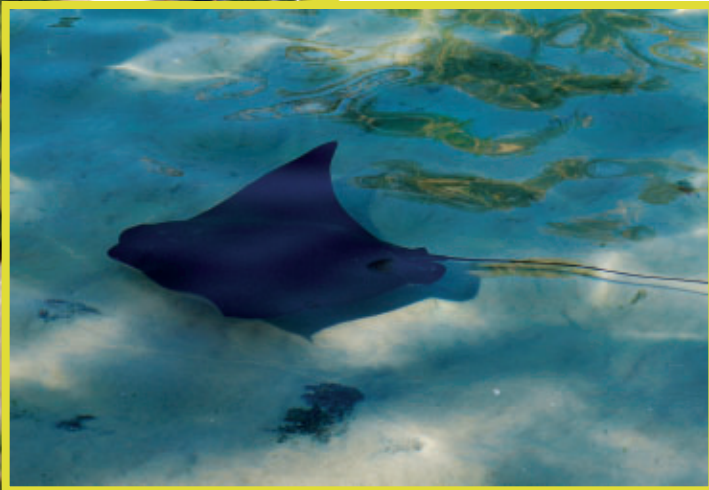
When you're ready to take a break, several white sand beaches with umbrellas and chairs are scattered throughout the park, including beside the Dolphin Lagoon. Some of the dolphins are ex-performers from the various SeaWorld parks and still seem to like pulling off a trick or two, even when hardly anyone is around. There's nothing like lounging by an uncrowded pool and watching what feels like an exclusive show by these enchanting creatures as they jump and frolic with each other.

For an additional fee, private cabanas are available with lounge chairs, refrigerators, private lockers and more.

### Other Animal Encounters

The free-flight Explorer's Aviary is home to 250 exotic birds, almost all of which can be hand fed. Carts are set up with cups of free bird food, as well as ID sheets to help identify the different species. This is a great place for some fun photos as many of the birds will walk right up or even perch on top of an outstretched arm. If you want them to really come towards you, be sure to ask the aviculturist on duty if there are any special treats on hand. And then get your camera ready.

Conservation Cabana is a small tent dedicated to providing information on ways



Stingrays are just one of the many animal encounters you'll have at Discovery Cove.



Assistant Supervisor of Animal Training Scott DeJesus poses with one of their friendly dolphins.







# OFFERS A PERFECT BLEND OF DOLPHINS, RAYS AND RELAXATION

By Deborah Brauser



Entertainment umbrella, the price also includes free admission for 14 consecutive days at either SeaWorld Orlando, Aquatica or Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

"But the very best part about Discovery Cove is the dolphins, of course," said Lucia Mancini, the 14-year-old niece of Mulligan, from Riverside, Ill. "I had never seen one that close before."

## The Dolphin Experience

There are two main types of admission categories. Both offer the same all-inclusiveness, but the pricier ticket includes a 30-minute interaction with a friendly and very vocal dolphin while the other does not.

Up to eight people (and one dolphin) are assigned to each group. After a short orientation, the group members assemble in one of the

shallow pools in the Dolphin Lagoon, which is kept cooler than the other pools at the park. During the half-hour session, a trainer gives demonstrations and leads the guests in feeding, interacting with, posing for photos, and sometimes even kissing the dolphin. (These photos cost extra.)

"Every interaction is truly unique. If guests have certain requests, and if we can accommodate it for them and it's safe for our animals and other guests, then we can certainly provide it," noted DeJesus.

The allotted time ends with each guest getting a chance to actually "swim" with the interaction's star by holding its dorsal fin as it tows you into shore. This part is exhilarating but also a little scary (like all good rides). The swim gives you a chance to see how strong they are.



Guests watch as a dolphin performs some tricks.

Some say it feels like holding on to a very smooth and slick rubber tire that's being pulled behind a boat.

"Every guest at Discovery Cove has their own idea of what it's like to actually swim with a dolphin," said Steward Clark, the park's vice president. "When they find themselves face-to-face with one of the beautiful Atlantic bottlenose dolphins at the park, few events can rival the thrilling mix of emotions and excitement."

There are currently more

than 40 dolphins at Discovery Cove. "All are allowed to participate in our interactions but none are ever forced to participate," said Trainer DeJesus. "We use positive reinforcements and we have plenty who seem to really want to do these interactions and are trained to do so. However, if one decides it doesn't want to participate anymore, it's no big deal. We'll just call over another one and the guests will get to interact with multiple dolphins for a unique experience."



# DISCOVERY COVE



**T**here's an overall feeling of relaxation and pampering at Discovery Cove, which is a nice surprise after navigating the bustling crowds usually found in Orlando's other theme parks. Stretching out over 30 lush, beautifully landscaped acres, Discovery Cove only allows about 1,000 guests a day. This, along with the slower pace and its all-inclusive design, gives it the feeling of an upscale resort – one that's ready to cater to your every need.

It's true that dolphins, and the chance to interact with them, are the main draw at this pricey park. But guests soon find there's more to discover here. "Discovery Cove is probably one of the most unique places in the world, where you get an opportunity to swim with thousands of tropical fish, hand feed exotic birds, swim with dolphins, feed

stingrays, all in one unique and beautiful setting," said Scott DeJesus, assistant supervisor of animal training at the park. "When guests get here it's such a surprise for them to be able to swim and snorkel and get up close and personal with so many different types of animals. We even have sloths and anteaters."

As guests first check in,

they're greeted with a sculpture of frolicking dolphins dangling from the ceiling and a concierge to tell them what to expect. Your photo is put onto badges to wear throughout the stay and to act as exclusive tickets to all that the park has to offer. Well, almost all.

You'll still have to pay for souvenirs, but all food

(including snacks), drinks, towels, dolphin-friendly sunscreen, lounge chairs and umbrellas, floaties, and a photo of your group upon entry are included in your admission. Plus, you'll receive your choice of two types of wetsuits to wear while on site and a snorkel and mask. (You'll not be allowed to bring your own equipment, as it may be harmful to the animals.)

"It's nice to not have to worry about money while there," said Terry Mulligan, from Clearwater, Fla. "When you're walking around in your [wetsuit], it would have been kind of hard to whip out your credit card or money. This way contributes to a much less stress day than it is when you're in the bigger parks. It wasn't cheap but I thought it was worth it."

As one of the parks under the SeaWorld Parks and



Small groups are taken out into the water to meet a dolphin.



# 2

## World of Disney

### Downtown Disney

**O**K, so you've been to all of the parks and your trip is winding down, but you still haven't found that one special thing to take back home. Well, before you head to the airport (where there's also a Disney store), stop by the largest Disney store in the world. Plush toys, check; Pins, check; Watches and jewelry, check. A princess makeover? Yeah, you can get that here too. If World of Disney doesn't have what you are looking for, then you probably don't need it. I especially enjoy their large DVD and music collection. I visit this section every trip to add the latest to my library.



# 1

## The Art of Disney

### Downtown Disney

**I**f you are a diehard Disney fan, you might want to take a second mortgage out on your house before entering the best collection of Disney inspired art at Walt Disney World. Original artwork and prints line the walls, all inspired by classic Disney movies or your favorite Disney attractions. This is the place to find the attraction posters that you pass before entering Main Street. They also have a large collection of the Walt Disney Classics Collection figurines. But for those looking for that perfect item at a great price, The Art of Disney has many of the latest Disney Vinylmation figures — the hottest collectible on property today. Even if you think the items here are a little out of your price range, do not miss the chance to check out this amazing store.



**S**kipper Ben is a former Walt Disney World cast member. He worked at Jungle Cruise, Muppet\*Vision 3D and as a producer for Radio Disney. He now resides in Dallas, Texas, with his wife Lisa (also a former cast member) and daughter Abigail Lily. He also hosts a weekly segment on the "Inside the Magic" podcast.

**Do you agree with Ben's Top 10?**

Let us know at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com)

**Send Ben your Top 10 ideas at [benthskipper@aol.com](mailto:benthskipper@aol.com).**





5

## Uptown Jewelers Magic Kingdom

**W**e cross the street for our next specialty shop. From this point forward, the collectibles start moving up the price scale. Here, you can find statues of all kinds of characters, but the big attractions are the custom-made watches with original artwork on the face. They have a vast selection of watches that range from the inexpensive to the “I might need to work a few hours at It’s a Small World to pay for this” watch. Personally, I’m a huge fan of a great watch, and Uptown Jewelers is the only place at WDW you need to go for that perfect timepiece.



4

## Sid Cahuenga's Disney's Hollywood Studios

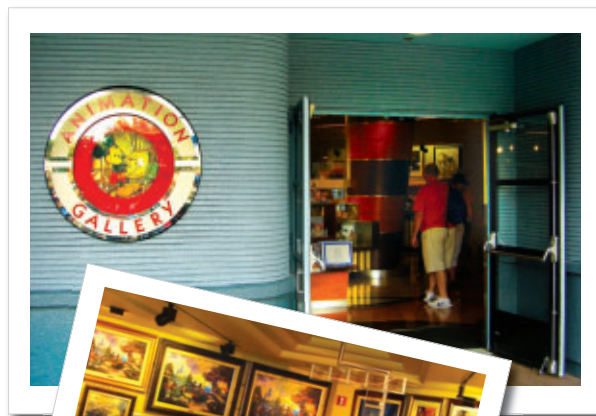
**F**or years, this was my favorite shop at Disney. It is still my parents' favorite place to window shop. Back in the day, we spent plenty of money here on movie collectibles. My parents' house is scattered with autographs we purchased over the years: Steven Spielberg, David Letterman, Nicholas Cage, Madonna, Johnny Depp. But my personal favorite purchase we ever made here is ... an apron from the Burger Barn worn by an extra in my family's favorite movie, “What’s Eating Gilbert Grape?” Today, the autographs are still pretty reasonable if that is your thing, but I advise checking out the stand next to the front counter where they have unframed autographs at a fraction of the price. On my last visit, you could get a Ben Affleck autograph for \$70 this way. What a steal!



3

## Animation Gallery Disney's Hollywood Studios

**N**ostalgia is the key word when it comes to this tremendous shop. After a walking tour of an animation studio, it's hard to just walk right through this shop as you exit the attraction. The main draws here are the hand-drawn animation cels used in classic Disney films. My family owns four of these: two from “The Jungle Book” and one each from “The Black Cauldron” and “Oliver and Company.” This was always the one big souvenir we would buy during our early visits, but 20 years ago, you could buy these masterpieces for \$100. These days, be prepared to spend a couple of thousand dollars for just one of these pieces of Disney history.



Photos By Brent Terrien



# 8 Villains In Vogue

## Disney's Hollywood Studios

If you are a fan of the "bad guys," then Villains in Vogue is the place to go. Cruella de Vil and Maleficent fans rejoice, this is where you can buy clothes, jewelry and artwork of those characters you love to hate. Besides villains, this is also your main stop to pick up Fantasmic! merchandise. And with the upswing in popularity of "The Nightmare Before Christmas," Jack Skellington and his crew can be found on a large array of items ranging from hoodies to dinnerware and statues.



# 7 Mouse Gear

## Epcot

What's not to love about Mouse Gear? This is one of my absolute favorite shops at Walt Disney World. This place is huge. It has everything you could want when it comes to characters. They have a large plush collection and their toy selection continues to expand. My two favorite areas are the dining department, where you can outfit your kitchen head-to-toe in Disney dinnerware, and the classic Epcot clothing selection. From time to time, they introduce T-shirts with classic Epcot logos or promotional pictures, with vintage style.

# 6 The Emporium

## Magic Kingdom

Everything that Mouse Gear does right, they learned from the grandfather of theme park shops, the Emporium on Main Street U.S.A. Growing up, this was the only place I would spend my saved allowance money. On the last day of every trip, I would buy the latest Disney World picture book and read it day and night until my next trip. All these years later, you can still buy these yearly books for all of the sweet memories of your trip. Fab Five merchandise can also be found in abundance here, especially Walt Disney World T-shirts featuring the characters and the year — so you can go home and always let everyone know about your trip in 2010.





# Skipper Ben's Top 10 Places to Buy Disney Collectibles

By "Skipper" Ben Rebstock

**F**inding the perfect collectible to top off your Disney vacation is never easy. There are so many choices among the thousands of stores on Disney property. But don't let the stress of this decision take away

from your fun. Before you go to the parks, check out my list of the Top 10 Places to Buy Collectibles at Walt Disney World and know where to go before you go.

## 10 The Chapeau Magic Kingdom

**Y**ou have to start this list with the quintessential Walt Disney World souvenir — Mickey ears. This is one of the first shops you'll pass as you enter the park, so get your ears early and wear them with pride. They have a variety of different styles these days. I really enjoy the ears that are themed around the nearest holiday, but you can never go wrong with classic black. For a small fee, you can also have your name stitched on the back. This makes for a great gift if you need to bring something back for someone.



## 9 Mombasa Marketplace Disney's Animal Kingdom

**T**ucked back by the entrance of Kilimanjaro Safaris, Mombasa Marketplace is truly a one-of-a-kind place. Nowhere else on property will you find authentic African collectibles. I especially love the animals carved out of wood, many the same as the ones you just saw on the safari ride. While this is technically still a post-ride gift shop, they don't beat you over the head with attraction merchandise. You can still get your jungle-inspired Animal Kingdom merchandise (which I do enjoy as well), but no other attraction gift shop gives you the taste of its themed location like Mombasa Marketplace.







Photo courtesy of TNA Wrestling

**In the ring he's about as hardcore as he can get (above, pinning Jeff Jarrett), but he's a different man when meeting Winnie The Pooh. Foley and wrestling manager Jimmy Hart (left) greet fans at Universal CityWalk.**



rode Space Mountain for the first time and loved it.

Foley said he had dinner at Cinderella's Royal Table inside Cinderella's Castle at the Magic Kingdom on this trip and he ranks it as one of his favorites in the Orlando area along with the Crystal Palace. "My advice to anyone is to take the time and spend the extra money to eat at a full service restaurant when possible," said Foley. "If for nothing else, just to slow down and relax, especially on a hot day."

When asked if he had a favorite attraction, he named a few such as The Tower of Terror at Disney's Hollywood Studios and the Spider-Man ride at Universal's Islands of Adventure before calling Big Thunder Mountain at the Magic Kingdom his all-time favorite.

Foley also spends time at Give Kids the World, a resort

in Kissimmee that creates magical memories for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. "I had no idea what a magical place it was until I walked in there. I think you would be hard-pressed to find someone who wasn't a good person working or volunteering there." Usually when he visits, he reads one of his children's books to the kids visiting the village.

When asked about going to theme parks with his fellow wrestlers instead of his family while on the road, Foley admits he finally realized there were far worse things a guy could be doing besides visiting a theme park without his family. "As much as I look forward to those family trips, having a side trip to one of the great theme parks around the country before a show in the evening with a few of the guys was something that

would keep you from losing your sanity on the road. I don't know if you can picture six rugged wrestlers all reciting the Spider-Man theme song, then being completely blown away by the attraction."

So the next time you're in a theme park, keep your eyes open. You just never know who you might see in the Haunted Mansion or Pirates of the Caribbean. It might just be the hardcore legend himself.



Photo by Scott Garland

**Wrestlers Scotty 2 Hotty and Mick Foley ride the surfboard outside of a Universal CityWalk shop.**



# HARDCORE WRESTLER OR HARDCORE THEME PARK FAN?

MICK FOLEY TALKS ABOUT HIS LOVE OF THEME PARKS

BY SCOTT GARLAND

Mick Foley (center) and his wrestler buddies Scotty 2 Hotty (left) and Edge pose with Spider-Man.



**M**ick Foley is a best-selling author, father of four, and one of the most successful performers to ever set foot inside a wrestling ring. He's been known as Cactus Jack, Mankind and Dude Love over his nearly 30-year career in wrestling. But it may be hard for some to imagine that the man referred to as the hardcore legend is also a hardcore theme park fanatic.

How is it possible that the man who has taken a 30-foot fall off the top of a steel cage and has been hit with a baseball bat wrapped in barbed wire can also be a fan of It's a Small World?

Foley spent most of his career with the WWE, but is now a member of TNA Wrestling, which tapes its main show at Universal Studios. (Could that be why he made the move?)

Foley said his first theme park memory is of his parents taking him to Santa's Village in Jefferson, N.H. in 1968. "Even though there weren't very many rides at the time, it had such a great atmosphere that it became part of my makeup." He returned to Santa's Village for the first time in 1996 and has gone back every year since. He recently acquired a merry-go-round from the park that he now has at his home on Long Island. "It's all of the different park trips that we took as a kid that kind of makes returning to theme parks almost like returning to childhood," said Foley. "I think in my case the profession that I am involved in is so physically and emotionally draining that having that piece of childhood to return to was what seemed to get me through the long weeks on the road."

Foley never visited Walt Disney World as a child. He finally made his first theme park trip to Orlando in 1995. "I can't imagine what my kids' childhoods would be like had we not made the Orlando attractions part of our vacation life." On this vacation Foley spent the first part of his trip at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and the second half at Universal's Hard Rock Hotel. "Even though it kills my image as one of the most notorious cheapskates in the history of wrestling, I found that if I saved my money for years sleeping in some questionable places on the road, I would have the money to put toward a good hotel to add to the theme park experience,"

Foley joked. "In my mind being that close to the park, especially being connected by monorail or boat to the Magic Kingdom is a price I'm willing to pay."

Foley said he's learned a lot from his 6-year-old son, who wasn't a big ride fan. He learned to slow down and take in all the parks had to offer aside from the rides. "There was a moment in time in which I was forcing my son to go on Dumbo when he didn't want to and he was in tears. It was then that I stepped back and said 'am I actually forcing my son to go on a ride that he has no desire to go on?' At that point I said I was going to take the parks at his pace." It must have paid off because on this trip his son



# Back issues available now.

If you missed any of these issues, don't worry!  
They're all still available at [AttractionsMagazine.com](http://AttractionsMagazine.com).



Vol. 1, Issue 2



Vol. 1, Issue 3



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Vol. 1, Issue 5



Vol. 1, Issue 6



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### CURRENT MATCH-UP

#### DOWNTOWN DISNEY

#### VS.

#### UNIVERSAL CITYWALK

THESE ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS HAVE A LOT IN COMMON, BUT WHICH WINS OUT?



**WINNER:** Although some good shops have left in the last year, there are still a lot of cool stores, including the world's largest Disney store.

#### SHOPPING



Your choices are somewhat limited, but you can buy souvenirs, clothes, candy and even get a tattoo.



**TOSS-UP:** From T-Rex and Rainforest, to Earl of Sandwich and Wolfgang Pucks, there's something for everyone.

#### DINING



**TOSS-UP:** The recent addition of three fast food options is what CityWalk needed. Don't forget the other great restaurants upstairs.



**WINNER:** With a new IMAX-like ETX theater, there's no better place to watch the latest Disney/Pixar film.

#### MOVIES



They have a new IMAX theater, but four less screens in total and you have to pay to park.



Since the Pleasure Island clubs closed, it's only family friendly entertainment. But it's good.

#### NIGHTLIFE



**WINNER:** They have nightclubs, live bands and it's an easy walk from two theme parks.



**WINNER:** Yes it can fill up quickly, especially at the Marketplace end, but free beats paid anytime.

#### PARKING



It's easy to get in and out, and most is under cover, but who wants to pay to park?



Teen pop star **Justin Bieber** put on a **Radio Disney concert** in the town of Celebration on Dec. 19, 2009. The teen girls' screams could be heard all around town.



Huey Lewis and The News was just one of the many bands performing for **Bands Brew & BBQ** during February weekends. The annual event at both SeaWorld and Busch Gardens features just what the name says, great barbecue food, bands and beer. The event used to be called Bud & BBQ.



**Chef Emeril Lagasse met fans and signed copies of his latest cookbook, 20-40-60: Fresh Food Fast**, at Universal CityWalk on Dec. 14, 2009. The book signing took place in front of his restaurant, Emeril's Orlando.



**Universal Studios' annual Mardi Gras** event started in early February and runs through April. The weekend events feature headline music, Cajun food and a Mardi Gras parade with plenty of beads to go around.



This **Mickey Mouse display made out of Coca-Cola cartons** was spotted in the Winn-Dixie supermarket just down from Downtown Disney. Others reported seeing similar displays in Publix and Albertson's markets around Orlando. How about Shamu and Woody Woodpecker next?



# Photo Finds

Orlando is always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.

Visit our Web site for videos and a gallery of more photos.



Photo by Marcus D'Amelio

**New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees** made good on his statement that he was going to Disney World. Brees paraded down Main Street U.S.A. at the Magic Kingdom on Feb. 9, the day after his team won the Super Bowl.



Disney held a "Celebrate Volunteers" day for media and select families at Epcot on Feb. 11 as part of their "Give a Day, Get a Disney Day" promotion. The day started with Ty Pennington, the Muppets and Disney characters unveiling **the world's largest canned food sculpture.**

The food was later packed up and trucked to the needy. Many Disney Channel stars were also on hand during the day.

**Demi Lovato and Joe Jonas** sang their new song "Make A Wave" during a private concert that night.



Fans of the toy and game, **Bakugan Battle Brawlers**, competed to see who was the best during the **Baku-Con convention and tournament** when it stopped in Orlando at the Gaylord Palms Resort on Jan. 30. The winners from Orlando went on to the finals in New York City.



## A Smarter Area

LOCATION: EPCOT

■ STATUS:  
COMPLETE



IBM recently unveiled a new exhibit at Innoventions. SmarterPlanet offers visitors a "behind-the-scenes" glimpse of how technology is helping solve the world's most complex problems. The exhibit consists of three key areas: Interactive kiosks offer guests a "match" game that reveals smarter planet solutions and a survey on their thoughts for creating a smarter planet; guests are invited to star in their own video game with Runtime (This portion of the exhibit has been in operation for just over a year.); and guests can peek through glass into a fully functioning IBM Smarter Data Center.

## New Hotel Near Downtown Disney

LOCATION: HOTEL PLAZA BOULEVARD

■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN



A long closed hotel just down the street from Downtown Disney has been given new life. A 14-story, 323-room Holiday Inn opened on Feb. 12. The hotel offers free transportation to the Disney parks, an onsite Disney store and free delivery of Disney purchases to the hotel. Look for our full review at [AttractionsMagazine.com](http://AttractionsMagazine.com).

For more  
"Work in Progress"  
visit the

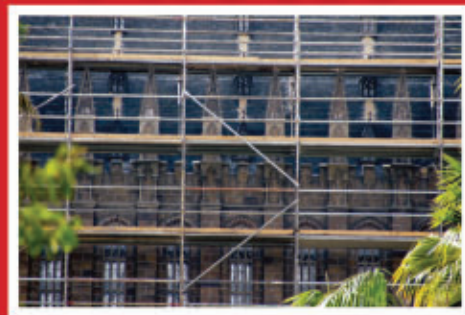
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## Videos



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## Feel the Force in Orlando

■ STATUS:  
COMING SOON

LOCATION: ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER

One of the largest official Star Wars fan events ever, Star Wars Celebration V will take place Aug. 12 to 15 in Orlando. Lucasfilm launched Star Wars Celebrations in 1999. Since then, the official Star Wars “parties” have become mega events, attracting tens of thousands of loyal and devoted fans and families. To date, there have been four Star Wars Celebrations in America, as well as a Star Wars Celebration Europe (2007) and Star Wars Celebration Japan (2008).

Visit [starwarscelebration.com](http://starwarscelebration.com) for more information.



## It's the Muppets

■ STATUS:  
NEW ARRIVAL

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

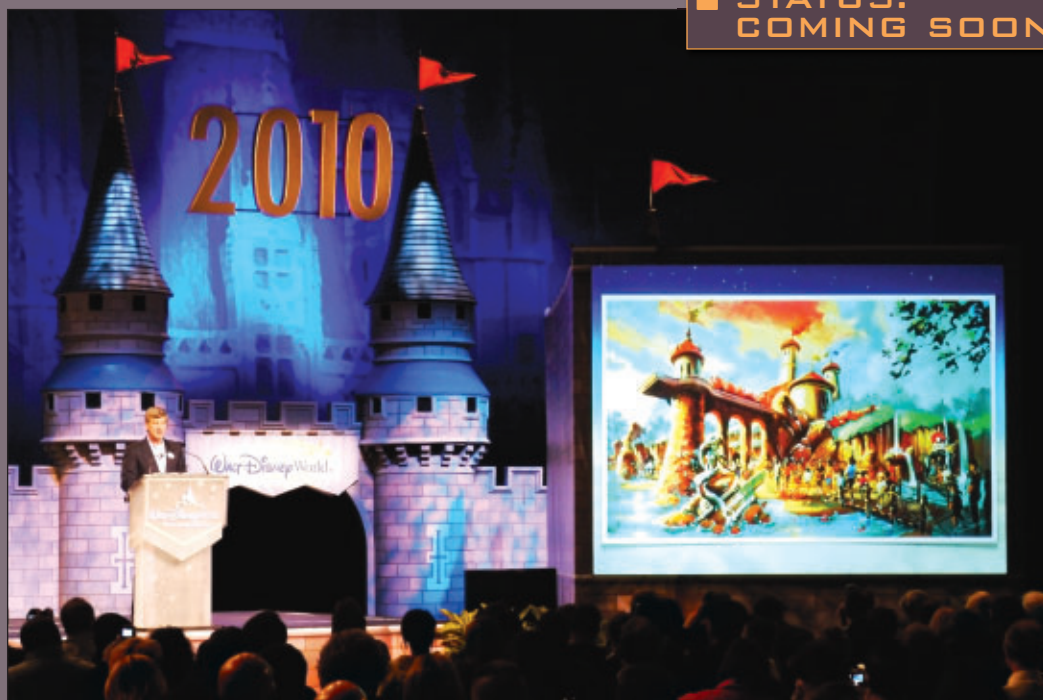


You can now see Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy and Sweetums, along with parade dancers and special floats and vehicles daily at the Magic Kingdom. The Honorary VolunteARS Cavalcade steps off minutes before each afternoon's Celebrate a Dream Come True parade. Disney hopes to inspire families to volunteer through the “Give a Day, Get a Disney Day” program that rewards volunteer service with admission for a day to a Disney theme park. Unfortunately, if you haven't signed up already, the promotion has reached its one million volunteer limit.

## A Summertastic Event

LOCATION:  
WALT DISNEY  
WORLD

The Main Street Electrical Parade will light up the streets of the Magic Kingdom and will headline new after-dark excitement at Walt Disney World this summer. Starting in early June, in addition to the return of the Electrical Parade, the Magic Kingdom will have an all new fireworks show and the Tower of Terror at Hollywood Studios will feature new lighting effects and a new drop sequence. For more on Summer Nightstastic, see page 60.



■ STATUS:  
COMING SOON



■ **STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

## A New Way to Slide

**LOCATION:  
AQUATICA WATER PARK**



A new family water slide is coming to Aquatica. Omaka Rocka will feature high-speed tubes and half-pipe funnels that'll have guests splashing and sliding frontward and backward and going up the walls. This is the first water slide of its kind in the world. Omaka Rocka will also be the first major new slide since Aquatica's opening.

## No More Happy Meals

■ **STATUS:  
CLOSING**

**LOCATION:  
DOWNTOWN DISNEY**



First McDonald's stopped serving food in the Disney theme parks, now its large restaurant at Downtown Disney is closing on April 30. A Latin chicken restaurant called Pollo Campero will open later this fall. The stand-alone McDonald's near Animal Kingdom will remain open as the only McDonald's on Walt Disney World property.

## Watch Out for Air Grover

**LOCATION:  
BUSCH  
GARDENS**

■ **STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION**



The new Sesame Street Safari of Fun kids area was expected to open at the end of March.

We'll bring you all the details in our next issue, but look for the new land to feature many new kids rides and shows. The signature ride is Air Grover, a junior coaster full of turns and mini-dives for parents and kids to ride together. You'll also be able to meet many of the Sesame Street characters at Big Bird's 123-Smile with Me.

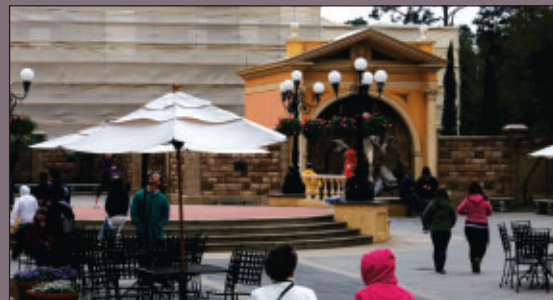
## Two New Country Restaurants

■ **STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

**LOCATION: EPCOT**



Epcot guests will have two new places to eat this fall. A brand new 300-seat pizzeria is being built in the back of the Italy Pavillion. The new eatery will feature wood-burning ovens, genuine Italian dishes, vaulted ceilings



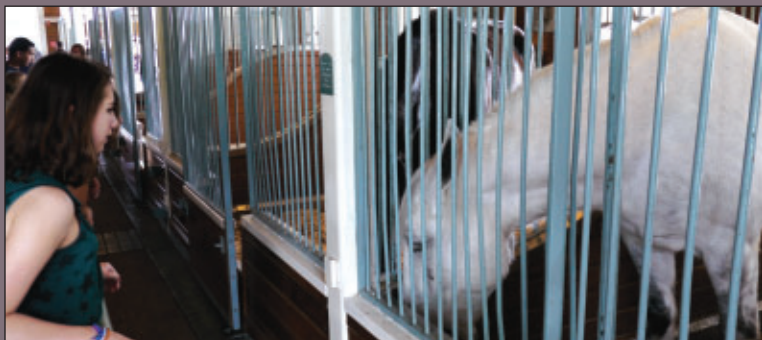
and outdoor dining. Water will be imported from a source where the water composition most resembles that of the water used in Naples, Italy, to make authentic Italian dough. Not to be outdone, the Mexico Pavillion recently tore down the Cantina de San Angel quick-serve outside dining restaurant and is building a new 400-seat waterside restaurant and quick service location specializing in freshly baked culinary flavors of Mexico.



## No More Horses

LOCATION: SEAWORLD AND  
BUSCH GARDENS

■ STATUS:  
CHANGED



Both Busch Gardens and SeaWorld announced they would no longer have horses on display when The Blackstone Group purchased the parks from Anheuser-Busch InBev last year. The horses at Busch Gardens were gone right away, but, although not the clydesdales they once had, SeaWorld kept some horses around a few months. At press time they too were going away to make way for a new experience. Busch Gardens now offers an Animal Connections experience. Guests get to try their hand at being a television animal handler in front of a green screen and then purchase a video of their show. Guests are given a furry or feathered animal to hold while reading their script. SeaWorld hasn't announced what will be in their stables, but rumors point to a similar green screen experience where guests have their face painted and go on a virtual safari.

## New Water Park and Resort

LOCATION: INTERNATIONAL DRIVE

■ STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

CoCo Key Water Resorts are adding Orlando to their portfolio of water resorts and hotels. Set to open this spring at 7400 International Drive, the 58,000 square-foot canopy covered water park will be the company's first outdoor water park. Other locations include Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City, Cincinnati, Boston and more. The water resort with a Key West feel will feature three water slides — the Boomerango, Surfer Splash and Over the Falls.



## ESPN Moves In

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD

■ STATUS:  
CHANGED



Walt Disney World's sports complex has a new name and some new bells and whistles. The recently renamed ESPN Wide World of Sports complex has been upgraded to include more than 40 high-definition and robotic video cameras, 10 handheld cameras and 40 high-definition video screens, including two Jumbotrons.

## IMAX 3D

LOCATION:  
UNIVERSAL CITYWALK

■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN



A new IMAX 3D theater has opened at the AMC Universal Cineplex 20. An old theater's screen was replaced with a special, larger IMAX screen that is positioned closer to the audience. The new theatre also features IMAX's digital projection system as well as its latest sound system. But not all IMAX Theaters are alike. Many people have criticized this new IMAX screen as not being as large as the original IMAX screens.



## New Meet & Greet Area for Mickey

LOCATION:  
MAGIC  
KINGDOM

■ STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Once Toontown closes to make room for the Fantasyland Forest expansion, Mickey will need a new place to meet with guests. It appears they're remodeling one side of Exhibition Hall at the entrance to the Magic Kingdom just for Mickey and his fans. There's no word on how soon the area will open, but expect Toontown to close shortly after. It's likely this will be the permanent new place to meet Mickey since there will be no place for him in Fantasyland.

## A Quick Bite of Sushi

LOCATION:  
UNIVERSAL  
CITYWALK

■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN

Fusion Bistro Sushi, a walk-up sushi bar, is open for customers on the upper level of CityWalk, near the Cineplex. It's open for lunch, dinner and late night dining. Wireless "sushi cameras" and a robotic sushi-roll making machine create a rock'n'roll Asian-fanfare attitude.



## Take a Virtual Stroll

LOCATION: ALL SEAWORLD PARKS

■ STATUS:  
ONLINE

Virtual visits are now available for all 10 SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment locations in the U.S., including Busch Gardens Tampa, SeaWorld Orlando, Aquatica, Adventure Island and Discovery Cove. A state-of-the-art camera automatically gathered photographs from the back of a modified bicycle. Google software then blended the images, creating the interactive and moveable 360-degree scenes Street View is known for. Visit [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com) to search for the park of your choice. Universal's parks are also available.



## Queen Victoria Room

■ STATUS:  
COMPLETE

LOCATION:  
GRAND FLORIDIAN RESORT



With just four tables, this is the ultimate Walt Disney World culinary experience, in a new private room at Victoria & Albert's restaurant. Ten courses and three to four hours of leisurely dining add up to a memorable evening.

## Legoland Florida is Really Coming

■ STATUS:  
CONFIRMED

LOCATION: CYPRESS GARDENS



It's true, it's true — Legoland is coming to Florida. After many rumors, Legoland executives finally made it official. Legoland Florida will be opening in late 2011. But it's sad news for long-time Cypress Gardens fans. With Legoland taking over the property, Cypress Gardens will never be the same. But Legoland officials promise to keep the gardens area of the park as beautiful as ever. Check page 46 for more information about Legoland Florida.



## World of Wizards

LOCATION:  
UNIVERSAL'S  
ISLANDS OF  
ADVENTURE

The Wizarding World of Harry Potter is just about to open its doors to Muggles. They still haven't given an exact opening date, but based on a "Today" show contest and a new travel package Universal is offering, we're guessing it'll open sometime in May. That'll be in time for our next issue, so look for a full wrap-up of the opening festivities in the Summer 2010 issue.

■ STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION



## One Planet Hollywood Store Closes

LOCATION: DOWNTOWN DISNEY

■ STATUS:  
CLOSED



The Planet Hollywood On Location store in Downtown Disney's West Side is now closed. The store was located next to the recently opened LittleMissMatched store. Even though it was their largest store in Disney World, they're still selling Planet Hollywood merchandise inside their restaurant and just outside of the restaurant. They also have a store on Sunset Boulevard in Disney's Hollywood Studios. A store called D-Street is set to open in April in this location, selling Vinylmation figures, clothing and Disney items by local artists.

## Fantasyland Forest

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

■ STATUS:  
IN PROGRESS



As of press time no construction walls had been put up and Toontown and all of Fantasyland were still open. Expect that to change soon. The Fantasyland expansion we told you about last issue is now being called Fantasyland Forest. The new area will include water features and more than 500 new trees. Fantasyland Forest will feature four areas: The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Dumbo and an area for Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella. Once those areas are complete, work will begin on Pixie Hollow. Visit [attractionsmagazine.com](http://attractionsmagazine.com) to see a large version of the scale model pictured here.

## Gone on Down the Bayou

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

■ STATUS:  
RETIRED



Princess Tiana's Showboat Jubilee was being performed on the Rivers of America for a limited time and now that time has passed. "The Princess and The Frog" show may no longer be running but you can still meet Princess Tiana and Prince Naveen at the park.



## GLORY AT THE GARDENS

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Busch Gardens

**Dates:** May 1, 8, 15

**Description:** A festival of live music and fellowship. Enjoy the music of your favorite Christian artists while taking in the attractions.

**May 1:** Matthew West, Brandon Heath and Jonny Diaz

**May 8:** Skillet and Building 429

**May 15:** Kirk Franklin and Mandisa



## STAR WARS WEEKENDS

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios

**Dates:** May 21 to 23, May 28 to 30, June 4 to 6 and June 11 to 13

**Description:** Join Jedi Masters, Sith Lords and Star Wars celebrities for special shows, memorabilia and a Star Wars parade of characters. This will be the last Star Wars Weekends to ride Star Tours before it closes this fall to be transformed into Star Tours II.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Walt Disney World Resort

[www.disneyworld.com](http://www.disneyworld.com)

(407) 939-6244

### Universal Orlando

[www.universalorlando.com](http://www.universalorlando.com)

(407) 363-8000

### SeaWorld Orlando

[www.seaworld.com/orlando](http://www.seaworld.com/orlando)

(800) 327-2424

### Busch Gardens

[www.buschgardens.com/BGT](http://www.buschgardens.com/BGT)

(888) 800-5447

### Orange County

### Regional History Center

[www.thehistorycenter.org](http://www.thehistorycenter.org)

(800) 965-2030

## SOUNDS LIKE SUMMER

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Epcot

**Dates:** June 15 to Aug. 9

**Description:** Sounds Like Summer is an annual live concert series that brings together a talented collection of tribute bands to authentically recreate the classic hits of legendary musical icons. The concerts take place in the America Gardens Theatre — adjacent to the American Adventure Pavilion.

**All events and dates are subject to change.** Please check with the proper organization before attending. Check [AttractionsMagazine.com](http://AttractionsMagazine.com) for up-to-date happenings in the Orlando area.



# Vacation Planner



**We've chosen our favorite upcoming events to spotlight.** You don't want to miss these on your next trip to Orlando.

## OUT OF THIS WORLD: COSTUMES FROM FILM AND TELEVISION



### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Orange County Regional History Center

**Dates:** Through May 16

**Description:** This 3,500-square-foot exhibition highlights television and movie history through more than 40 costumes, props and models from some of the your favorites spanning 60 years. You'll see costumes and props from "Star Wars," "The Wizard of Oz,"

"Ghostbusters," "The Terminator," "Indiana Jones," "Star Trek," "Batman" and many more. Also on display is Lights! Camera! Action! Filming in Paradise, a history of filming in Florida.



**The exhibit will also feature these special events:**

**Cosmic Comic Connection:** 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on April 10

**Masters Go to the Movies:** April 24 and April 25

**Star Wars Day:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on May 8

## EPCOT INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Epcot

**Dates:** Through May 16

**Description:** Epcot is filled with colorful flowers and the greenest of gardens. In addition to the eye candy, you'll find many workshops, topiaries, kids areas and concerts. Look for An American Gothic Mickey and Minnie Mouse, an expanded Pixie Hollow with butterfly house, and more than 100 topiaries.





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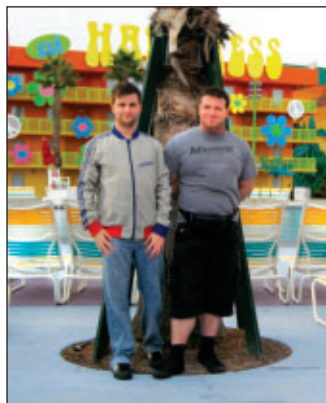


After reading one of your e-mail newsletters, I noticed that I did not receive my Winter 2010 magazine. I contacted you about the missing mag and received a response right away. And to top it off, you mailed the magazine that week. Thank you so much for publishing a masterpiece.

Katie Schultz  
Muskego, Wis.

**You're welcome, but a masterpiece? I don't know if we deserve that much praise, but we'll take it. The e-mail newsletter is a great way to stay on top of the latest news and issues available. Anyone can subscribe for free at [attractionsmagazine.com/newslettersignup](http://attractionsmagazine.com/newslettersignup).**

## ALL THE WAY FROM BELGIUM



In December me and my partner Timm went to our first trip to Orlando all the way from Belgium (It was a dream since we were kids).

We stayed at Disney's Pop Century Resort and we enjoyed it. We have seen lots of attractions we could only dream of in Belgium. This is

really our greatest trip ever.

One day we visited the Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure. We are looking forward to coming back to see the finished "Wizards World of Harry Potter."

Thank you Orlando for the good time and thank you "Orlando Attractions Magazine" so we can stay up to date with what's happening on the other side of the world.

Bram Lancsweert  
Bredene, Belgium

**We're glad you made one dream come true. Come back for the sequel.**

## GHOSTS OUTSIDE OF THE HAUNTED MANSION?

For our next trip to Orlando, we are interested in taking an Orlando ghost tour. How does your magazine rate this attraction? Is it worth our time and money?

Tom Rifici  
Toms River, N.J.

**I wish we could tell you Tom, but that's one attraction we haven't done yet. But we're planning on it. That would be a good story for our Fall issue. Have any other readers taken any ghost tours in Orlando? If so, write in and let Tom and I know how you liked them.**



**THEN ...**

**... AND NOW**

**W**e recently spotted this old postcard still for sale in a local grocery store. It depicts the old ride at Universal Studios called Kongfrontation. It was one of the original attractions when the park first opened in 1990. The ride took guests through New York subways then they boarded an open-air aerial tram. This took them through the city and face-to-face with King Kong. The ride closed in 2002 to make way for the Revenge of the Mummy coaster. Brendan Fraser is pictured here in front of the attraction during a promotional appearance for the latest "Mummy" film. A new King Kong 4D attraction is being built at Universal Studios Hollywood after their older one was destroyed by a fire.



## WRITE TO US!

We want your letters! If you have any **comments** about the magazine, **questions** about traveling to Orlando, or fun stories or pictures to share, simply head to [attractionsmagazine.com](http://attractionsmagazine.com) and fill out the contact form or e-mail us directly at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com).



# Who is the smartest one of all?

Put your knowledge to the test with **WDW Trivia**!

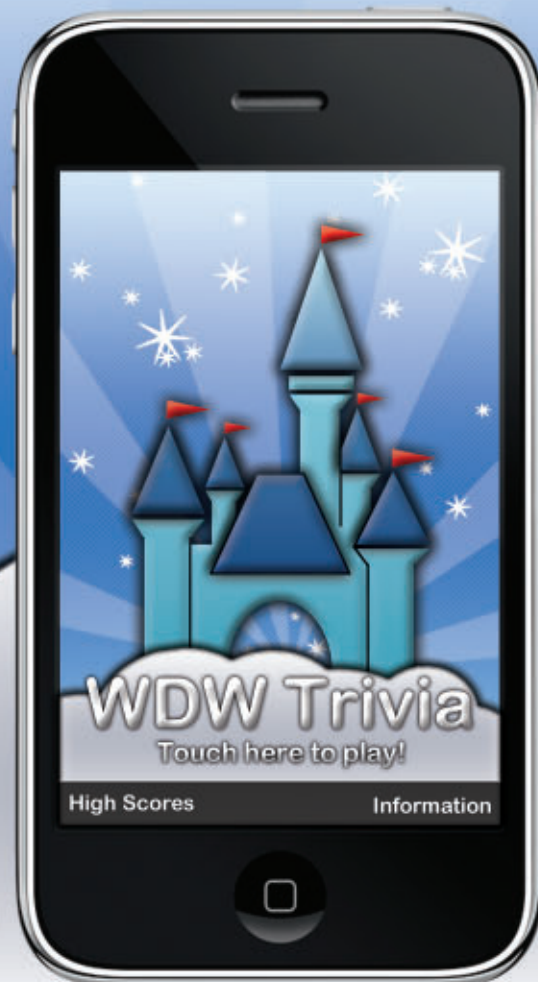
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# HIDDEN MICKEYS

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## YOUR COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS AND CREATIVITY ...

### ATTRACTIONEERS, IT'S WHO WE ARE

I believe the writing staff, editing staff, photographers, coffee getters ... in fact everyone involved with "Orlando Attractions Magazine" are absolute geniuses. Yes readers, this is for you too.

We the readers go on a magical ride, led by family known as "Orlando Attractions Magazine." We explore new destinations, go on new journeys, filled with adventures and new explorations. Each new beginning is fueled by curiosity with happiness being our guide, pages being our map. With each issue we continue to be big kids, only limited by our imagination.

We are Attractioneers!

Thank you Orlando Attractions Magazine for keeping the dream alive, see you next journey!

Brent Arseneault  
President CCOAMFC  
(Canadian Chapter of Orlando Attractions Magazine Fan Club)  
London, Ontario

**Ha, that's great Brent. For those who don't know, after writing a glowing letter about the magazine in the Winter issue, and proclaiming himself president of Orlando Attractions Magazine fan club Canada, we made it official.**

### CASTLE FLOWERS



I just wanted to share these photos that I took at the Rose Garden in the Magic Kingdom on the day the Christmas Day Parade was supposed

to happen but was postponed.

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.

Evan Henk  
Punta Gorda, Fla.

**Thanks for sharing Evan. It's very nicely composed and an angle not many people notice.**

### PRAISE FOR POTTER ARTICLE

Dear Barbara Nefer,

You wrote the article on the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, which was phenomenal. I have been staying on top of this attraction for months upon months and you still got more dirt than me. I would like to thank you for writing the article. It was very informative. Keep up the great work.

Nick Lepa  
Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

**Our thanks as well to Barbara for penning a great article about the Wizarding World and helping to make the Winter 2010 issue one of our best sellers. Look for more by Barbara and about the Wizarding World in future issues. Nick also sent praise for more of our writers, but we'll save those for a future issue.**

### MR. MINIATURE



Why don't you do a story on Robert Olszewski? I was able to meet Mr. Olszewski before one of his signing events last year and he was the nicest person you could meet. In case you are not familiar with him, he is the artist that recreates various Disney scenes in

We have a new feature on our Letters page this issue. Before each issue goes to press, we'll ask a question on our Facebook page and print your answers on the Letters page.



**For this issue, we asked our Facebook fans: Are you looking forward to the Fantasyland Forest expansion or Wizarding World of Harry Potter more?**

**Dana Vastano** Fantasyland Forest expansion—definitely! Although I'm very sad to see Toontown go :(

**Shelly SoontobeValladolid Smith** Harry Potter. My kid's past princess, long, long past, but HP is for just about all ages past preschool.

**Sean Hill** Potter!

**Stephen Landsman** WizWoHaPo!!!

**Lisa Merritt** Fantasyland! Specifically Ariel ride and Be Our Guest Restaurant.

**Tina Saladino** Hanekamp Both....I love Disney, but I also love Harry Potter!

**Frank A Hart** Fantasyland all the way

**Lisa Picard Holland** Fantasyland! Not a Harry Potter Fan!

**James Goodman** TOTALLY FantasyLand - but I may spend one day exploring Harry Potter. But probably will NOT return! GO DISNEY!

**Lea McCormack Robinson** Fantasyland, hands down!

**Matthew Pezzula** Harry Potter. Imagine an attraction that has no reason not to be amazingly better than Spiderman. Same company building the show scenes, plus a robocoaster.

**Lindsay Murray** Both!

**Brenda Wels Bowden** Both! But I'm with Lisa — Fantasyland, especially for Ariel ride and Beast's castle restaurants.

**Joelle Pitera Berry** Fantasyland Forest. All I can say is...it's about time!!

**Dan Grote** Wizarding World of Harry Potter FTW!!

**Scott T Nadeau** Fantasyland!

**Become a fan of Orlando Attractions Magazine on Facebook to answer next issue's question, add your comments and keep up with all the latest news.**



miniature. They are remarkable. You might even be able to hit him up for ad space in your magazine. Just a thought. Here is a link to his Web site: [olszewskistudios.com](http://olszewskistudios.com).

I have included a picture of Bob, right, and me before the signing event last June.

Michael Cox  
Saint Charles, Mo.

**We like the way you think. Thanks for the idea. We'll add it to our list. There's more than one of Mr. Olszewski's creations among the staff here at the magazine.**

### MISSING MAG MADE GOOD

I just wanted to compliment you on your awesome customer service.



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**"Love it!"**

—Kate Humber in West Virginia

**"Brilliant!"**

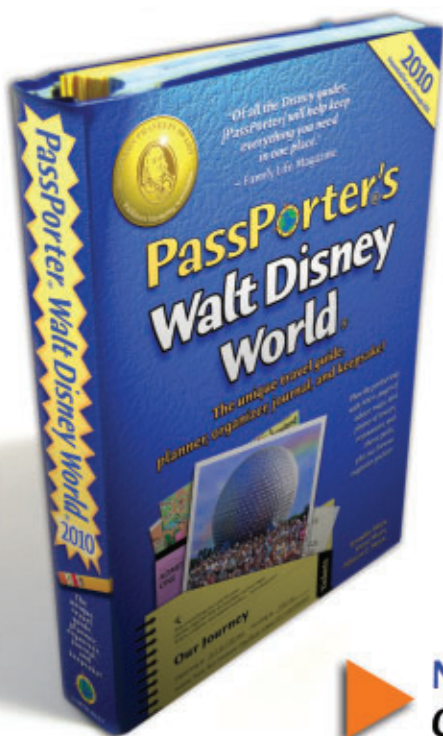
—Florence Mitchell in Pennsylvania

**"Amazing!"**

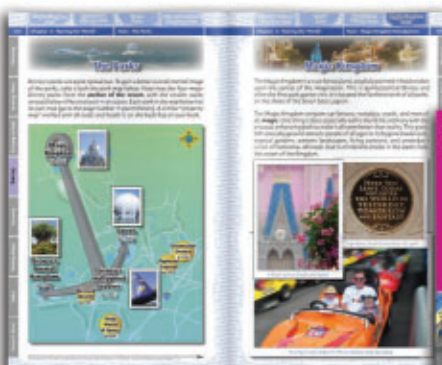
—Janelle Comeau in Nova Scotia

**"Holy Cow."**

—Gina Peterson in Texas



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## WIZARDING WORLD FROM ALL ANGLES

### ONLINE EXTRAS

- **Videos & Photos:** We went to all angles to provide you updated photos and videos on the progress of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. Check out our helicopter tour above Islands of Adventure, watch the Super Bowl commercial in HD, read about the guest experience in Ollivanders Wand Shop and view an augmented reality map of the whole Wizarding World.

## MUPPETS, DISNEY STARS AND VOLUNTEERS, OH MY!

### ONLINE EXTRAS

- **Videos & Photos:** We spent a full day at Epcot to bring you photos and videos of the world's largest canned food sculpture, the Muppets on parade, Disney Channel and other stars, Disney Streetmosphere performers and the premier of a new song by Joe Jonas and Demi Lovato.



## THESE STORIES AND MORE ...

### ONLINE EXTRAS

- **Christmastime in Orlando - Videos and Photos:** There were a lot of special events at all the parks this past holiday. Checking out all our videos and photos may take you until next season.
- **New online columns:** We debuted two new online only regular columns. In addition to "Out of the Loop" by Andy Guinigundo, we now save you some money with "PARKsaver" by Chris Ollendorf, and save you time with "Insider Top Tips" by Kevin Yee.
- **Top concerts - Videos:** February brings some of the top names in music to SeaWorld and Busch Garden's Bands Brew & BBQ and Mardi Gras at Universal Studios. Visit our page on [youtube.com/attractionsmagazine](http://youtube.com/attractionsmagazine) or the Videos page at [attractionsmagazine.com](http://attractionsmagazine.com) to see Huey Lewis and The News, Zac Brown Band, Montgomery Gentry and SeaWorld's regular band, The Groove Chefs.
- **Luxo Jr. dances for you - Video:** He's sometimes elusive, but we caught Pixar's Luxo Jr. on video dancing at Hollywood Studios.



## SPORTS CELEBS ON THE GREEN CARPET

### ONLINE EXTRAS

- **Videos & Photos:** Get a closer look at the new ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex with our videos and photos featuring the new technology and features, and all the sports stars at the grand opening.

## TWEETS FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/attractions](http://twitter.com/attractions) to receive the latest up-to-the-minute news, information, photos and links from Orlando's theme parks and attractions. Also become a fan of our Facebook page at [facebook.com/attractionsmagazine](http://facebook.com/attractionsmagazine).





# INDEPENDENT DISNEY BOOKS

BY AUTHOR KEVIN YEE

Enjoy trivia, insider tributes, and historical facts about Walt Disney World? Kevin Yee has spent twenty years working in, researching, and publishing about Disney theme parks.



**NEW in 2010!**

“Your Day at the Magic Kingdom” is an interactive game book aimed at children. Because the story unfolds with branching choices, the reader (or listener) gets to decide what happens next, page by page. Is it time to ride Pirates of the Caribbean or get a snack? Should you hop in line for Dumbo or Haunted Mansion? You decide. After all, it's YOUR Day at the Magic Kingdom!

“101 Things You Never Knew About Walt Disney World” explores the many hidden tributes and references to bygone attractions that populate the theme parks. The individual 101 Things referenced by the title are all items you can actually point to at the parks, so that the book provides a kind of walking tour of the parks that yields a glimpse of the deeper history percolating below the surface.



Kevin Yee is also the author of three books about Disneyland, the most recent being *Mouse Trap*, an intimate recounting of what a decade as a front-line worker at Disneyland looks like.

\*All books are available from Amazon.com or from your local bookstore.



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We talk to Mick Foley about his love of theme parks.

### 26 Skipper Ben's Top 10 Places to Buy Disney Collectibles

Find out the best places to shop on Disney property.

### 30 Discovery Cove

This relaxing theme park lets you get close to many animals.

### 36 A Different Perspective

Helicopter tours offer a unique view of Orlando.

### 42 Celebrating 10 Years of Pin Trading

Find out how to get your Disney pin collection started.

### 46 Legoland is Coming to Florida

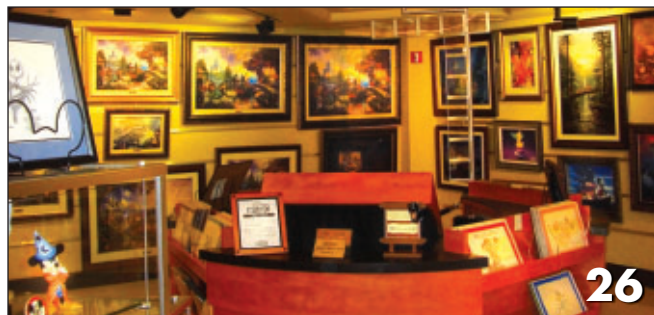
It's still more than a year away, but the excitement is growing.

### 50 Italian Charm at Portofino Bay

Live like a movie star at this Universal Orlando Hotel.

### 54 Mythos Offers a Feast for the Eyes and Mouth

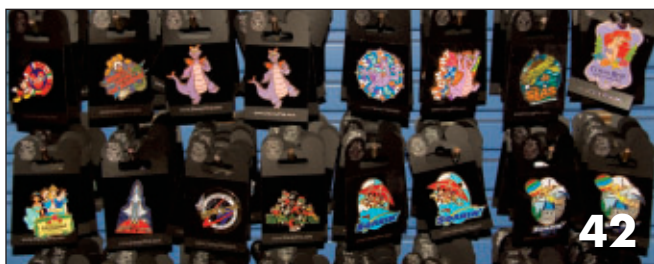
Stop by this unique restaurant on your way to The Wizarding World.



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**ON THE COVER:** A look at the Future World area of Epcot from above.

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